THE ART OF DREAMWORKS TROLLS BAND TOGETHER celebrates the much-anticipated latest chapter in DreamWorks Animation's blockbuster musical franchise. Following beloved Trolls, Poppy and Branch, on an action-packed, rainbow-colored family reunion, this insider's guide showcases hundreds of character designs and concept art from the making of the movie, along with exclusive interviews from the writers, artists, and filmmakers who brought this psychedelic joy-bomb to life.

DreamWorks Trolls Band Together
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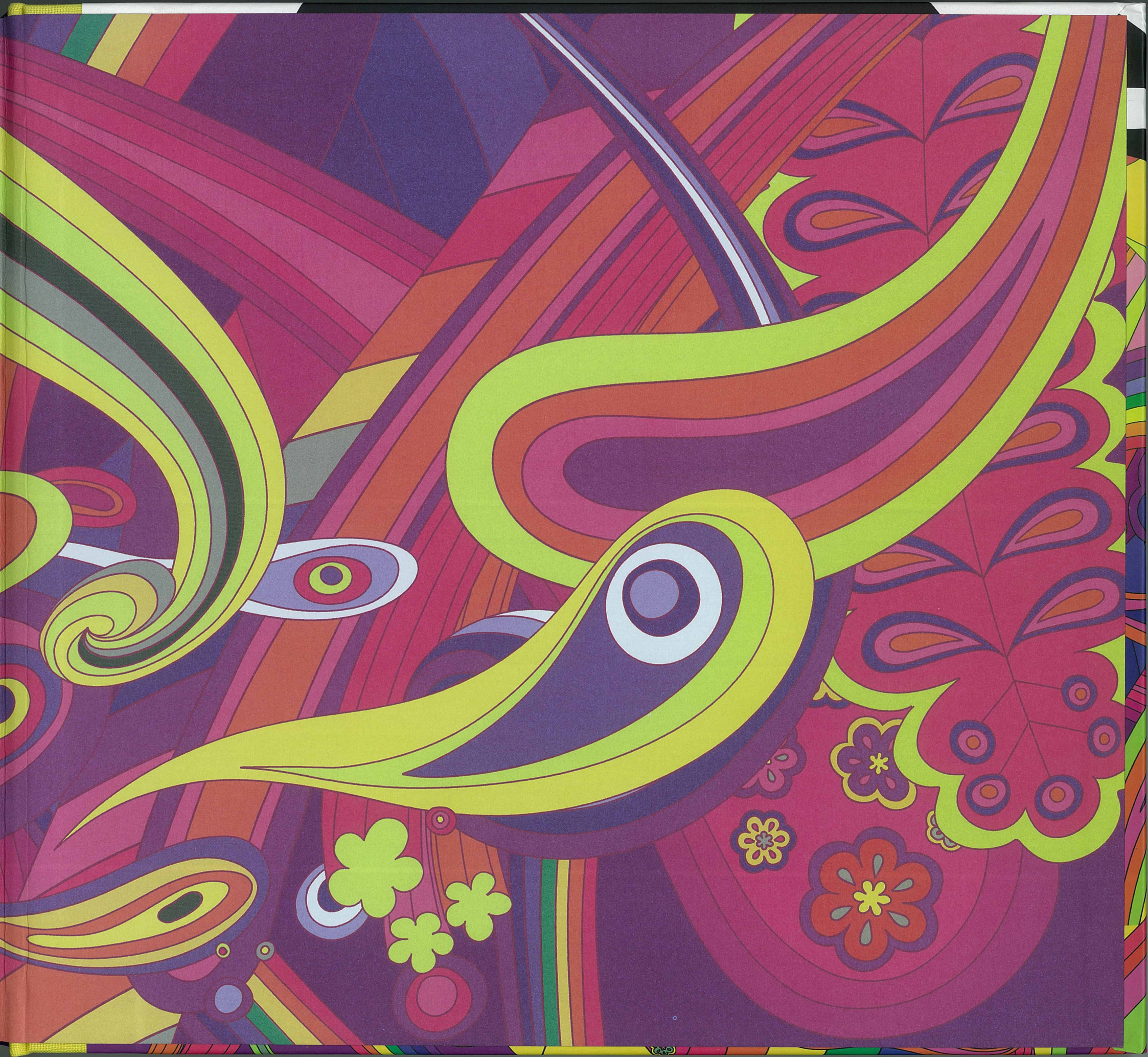
Hueso

DREAMWORKS

The Art of Trolls Band Together

Text by Noela Hueso · *Afterword by* Tim Heitz



FLOYD

JOHN DORY

BRANCH

CLAY

SPRUCE

DREAMWORKS

DREAMWORKS

THE ART OF TROLLS Band Together

Text by **NOELA HUESO**

Afterword by **TIM HEITZ**

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CAMERON + COMPANY
Petaluma, California

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Wish You
Were Here!

INTRODUCTION

It's a revelatory moment in the opening frames of *Trolls Band Together*, the third installment of DreamWorks Animation's mega-successful *Trolls* franchise. Four brothers, members of the hit boy band BroZone, are getting ready for the first show of their tour. The band consists of John Dory, aka the leader, who is determined, perhaps a little too much, to have a perfect tour; Clay, the fun boy; Spruce, the heartthrob; and Floyd, the sensitive one. Joining them as the newest member of the group is their youngest brother, Bitty B, the baby . . . better known to *Trolls* fans as . . . Branch!

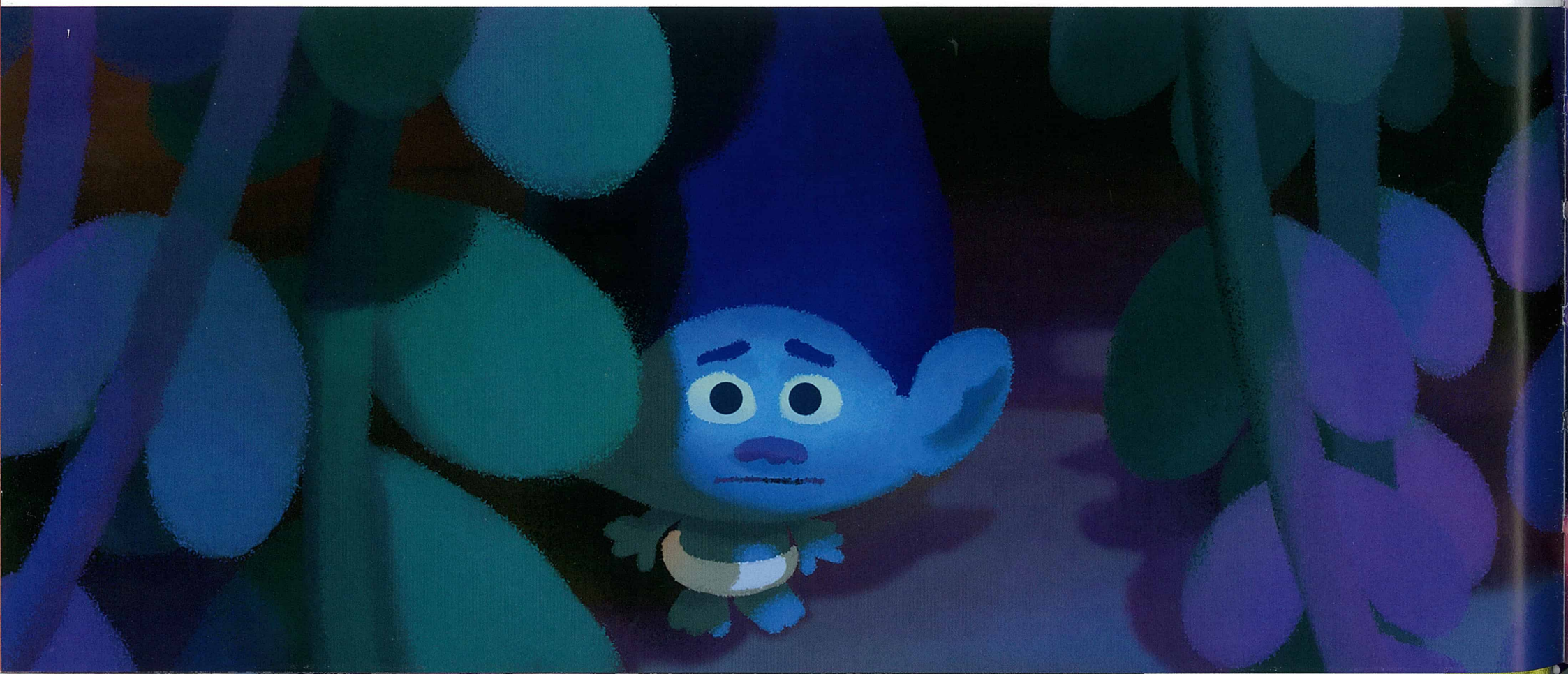
Once they're on stage, they go big: the brothers hit their marks, and their voices come together in what promises to be a perfect family harmony . . . until they don't. In a matter of seconds, things go from cool to cataclysmic as their coordination starts falling apart, ending in disaster. More chaos ensues backstage as the disgusted older brothers walk out on the band—and each other—leaving baby Branch on his own to care for Grandma.

Flash forward twenty years to the day of Bridget and King Gristle's wedding in a brighter, friendlier Bergen Town. Everybody is there—including John Dory. He arrives out of the blue, flinging himself down into the middle of the ceremony from a nearby tower, looking for Branch. Still struggling with feelings of abandonment from years ago, Branch is less than excited to see his brother and initially denies even knowing him.

"It made a lot of sense, in terms of Branch's character, that he would have this huge secret and not tell anyone about it for all these years because he's a pretty closed-off guy," says co-director Tim Heitz.

Poppy, meanwhile, is thrilled to meet Branch's heretofore unknown family member. If only she were lucky enough to have a sibling! It is only when John Dory explains that Floyd is in danger and that the brothers need to come together to save him that Branch has a change of heart, setting the wheels in motion for the Trolls' next adventure: Operation Family Harmony, which, as it turns out, includes the discovery of Viva, the sister Poppy never knew she had! Their ultimate destination? The glitzy and glamorous Mount Rageous, where Floyd is being held captive by Velvet and Veneer, a lazy, fame-hungry brother-sister duo who are literally sucking the life out of him for their own ambitions.

"This movie is all about family—the good, the bad, the ugly, and the glorious; the family you were born into and the one you make," says DreamWorks Animation president Margie Cohn. "Families aren't perfect, but they're important to everyone. The movie celebrates the 'warts and all' of familial love, which we think will resonate with audiences."



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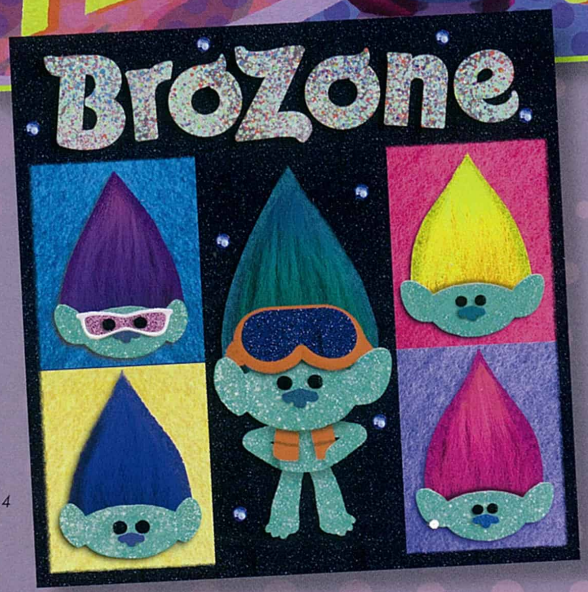

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1, 4: Stevie Lewis • 2, 3, 5, 6: James Ng • 7: Production still

7

3

1, 2: Ryan Carlson; • 3: Character render • 4: Dave Cooper

In *Trolls Band Together,* the Trollsverse is expanding and becoming more personal at the same time. According to producer Gina Shay, its premise has been in the seed stages for a long time; in fact, she envisioned a family-tree saga when the first *Trolls* was in production. As the various franchise extension groups, such as series, publishing, and games, plotted what stories to tell, Shay asked them to hold off on any further family-related themes and to stay away from a boy band–related premise. "We were always headed here," she says.

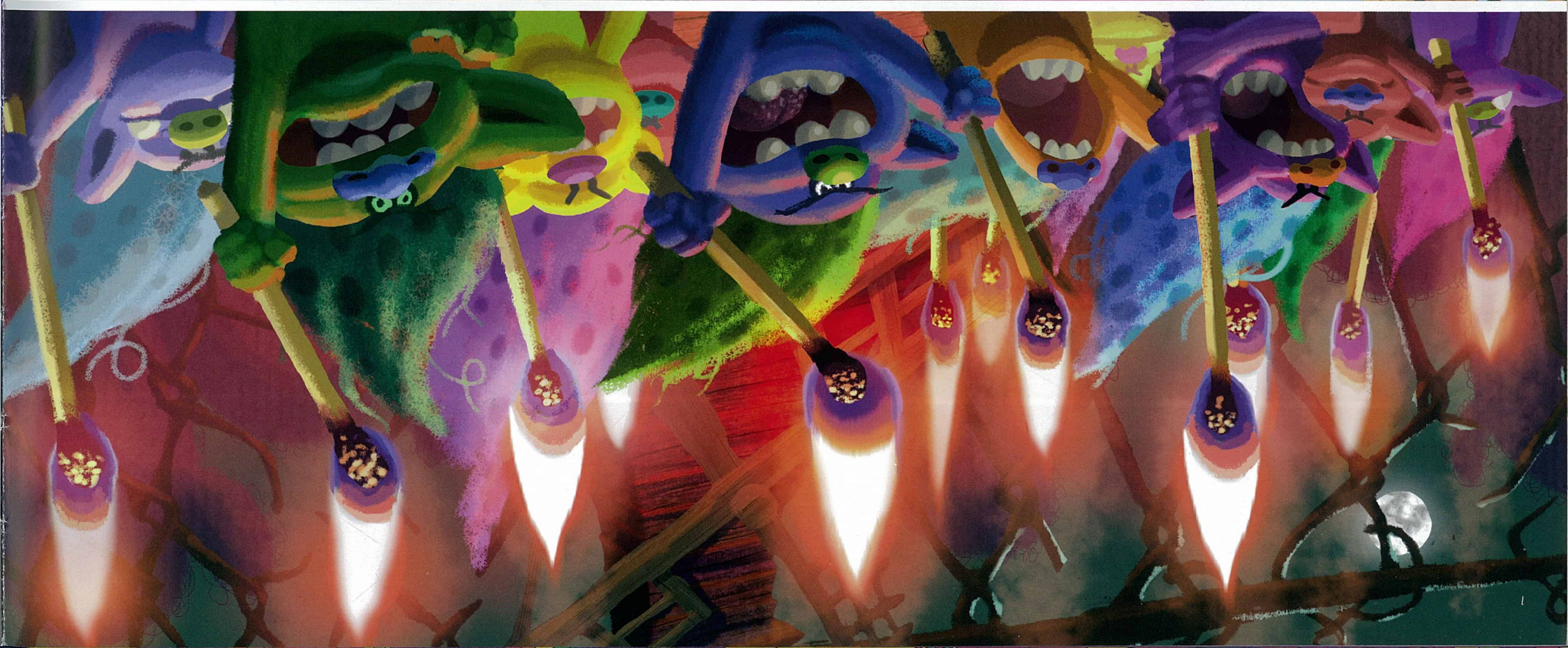
Like its predecessors, *Trolls Band Together* is much more than a funny, endearing musical extravaganza; it works on a lot of different levels and explores deep themes even while it has audiences laughing and tapping their toes. Where the first movie "was about not needing external vices to find internal happiness," Shay says, and the second was about celebrating differences, *Trolls Band Together* is "more intimate—going inward to heal wounds that you carry around with you from your past relationships."

Director Walt Dohrn agrees. "In this one, we really focused on the internal journey, about dealing with trauma," he says. "We thought it would be interesting to take a closer look at happiness and positivity in the way that we use it as a mask."

Dohrn also drew story inspiration from his own experience with his older brother, which became the basis for the relationship between John Dory and Branch.

Sellick
Sons

ONE DAY
SPOT
LAST



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1: Ryan Gerrish • 2: Ruben Perez • 3: James Ng • 4: Craig Kellman

"He was this guy that I worshiped," Dohrn says. "He was much older than me, and it felt like he was ten feet tall. He was this presence who would take over the room . . . he's since passed away, but those memories stuck with me."

Says Shay, "At the core of *Trolls Band Together* is an exploration of the delicate emotions centered around sibling dynamics: how we hold on to the past, sometimes to our own detriment; how we are shaped by our relationships with our siblings; being young and vulnerable living side by side at a young age. It's all very messy and complex, and sometimes these relationships don't age well, but we can often let go, embrace the joy in the evolved relationships, and find a path forward with our siblings that can result in a spectacular bond. Like a boy band bond."

Trolls Band Together is also a celebration of the boy band genre and a nod to the man whose involvement in the franchise has contributed to its success: Justin Timberlake, who stars as Branch, has provided award-winning original music and is the executive music producer on *Trolls Band Together*.

"Coming up with something electric and original for a sequel is a true challenge, but this team was absolutely up for it. I think they were secretly dying to be able to finally explore Justin Timberlake's boy band history in this franchise, and once they had that opportunity, they ran with it in a way that only a *Trolls* movie can!" says Kristin Lowe, chief creative officer of DreamWorks Animation. "The joy of waiting until the third movie to do this is that audiences had the opportunity to get to know his character, Branch, on his own terms in the first two movies, which makes learning this piece of his backstory all the more satisfying."

When it comes to creating a satisfying film from a technical standpoint, the filmmakers agree that the goal is always to "go bigger in terms of what we can do," says Michael Hamler, head of lighting. "That's a lot of fun, because you're trying to tackle all of these very unique and ever-increasing challenges on these films; that's both the challenge and the reward."

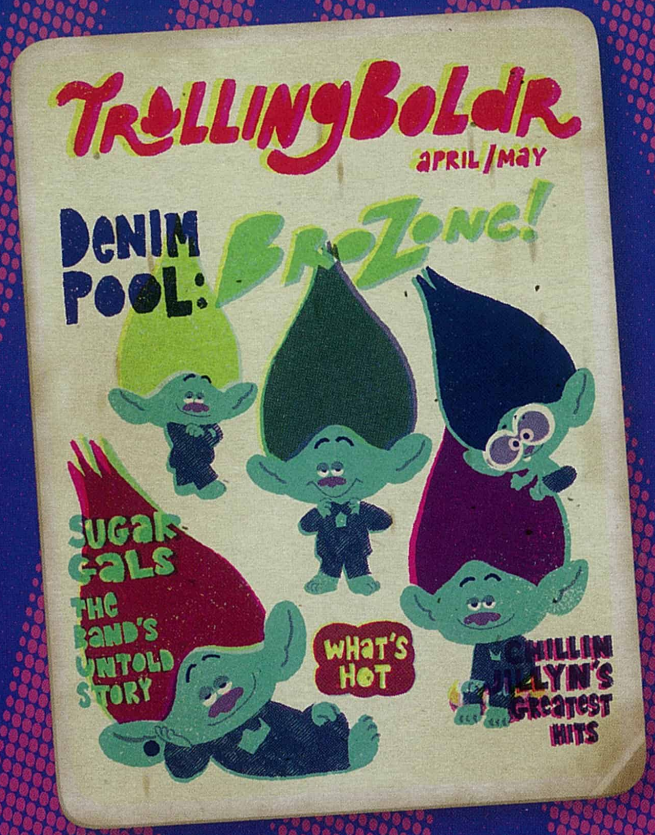
"The look and feel of these movies are so specific and unique," says Lowe. "There is truly nothing else like them, and that is one of my favorite things about this franchise. They're so sweet and so full of such unbridled joy and energy, and then sometimes they hit you out of left field with something totally subversive and unexpected that catches you completely by surprise."

In *The Art of DreamWorks Trolls Band Together*, the filmmakers tell the story in their own words, sharing their thoughts about their filmmaking process, the characters they've created, and, of course, the spectacular art.

BroZone

THE PHENOMENON

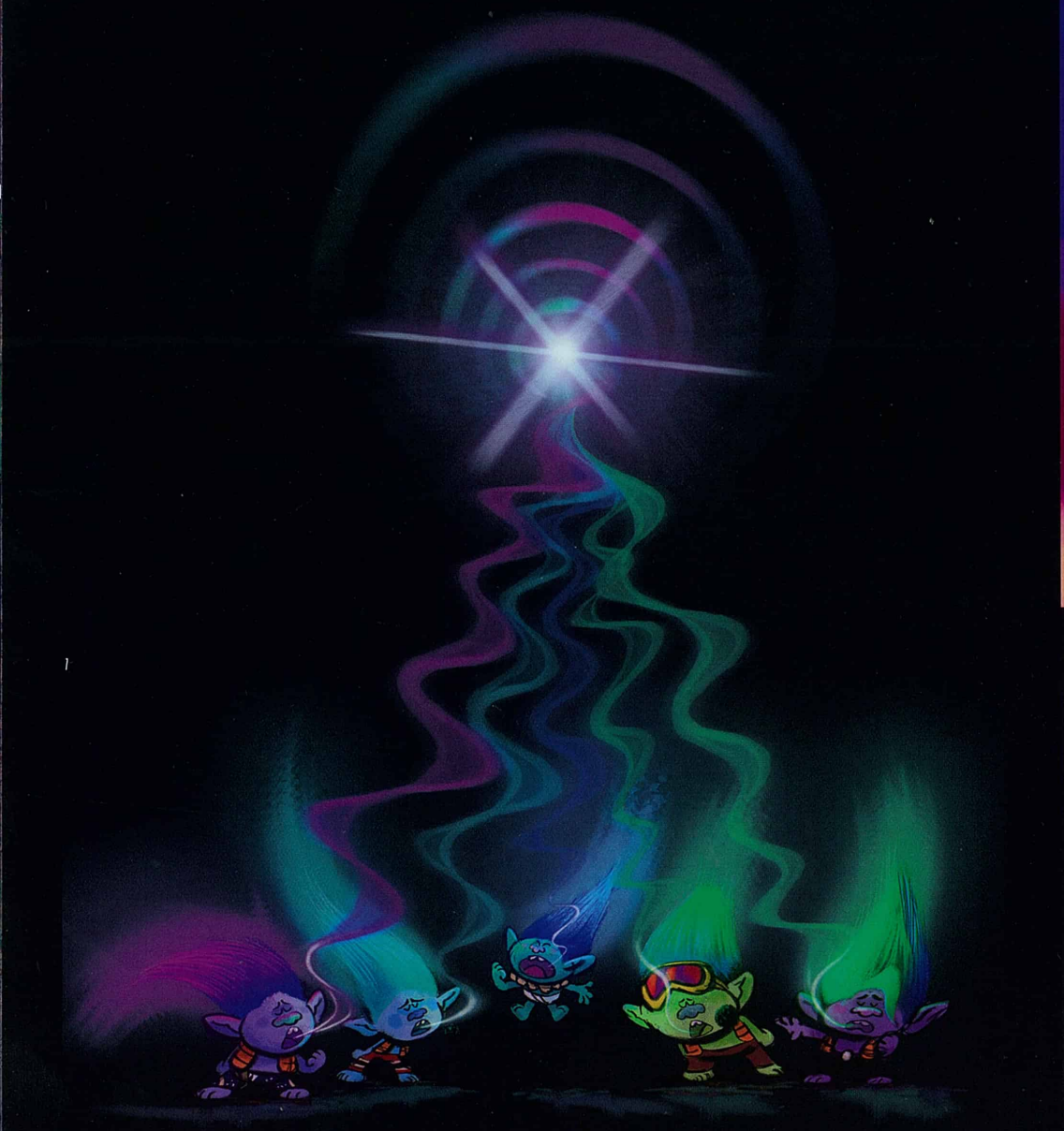
With their distinctive choreography, melodic vocal harmonies, and catchy tunes, the members of BroZone are teenage dreams. They're idolized by legions of devoted, die-hard fans in the Trollsverse who copy their dance moves, buy their records, sing their songs (who can forget "Girl Baby Baby" or "Baby Baby Girl Woman"?), and collect every magazine cover they've ever graced. Who can blame them? BroZone is one of a kind. The real deal. The genuine article . . . and boy, are they cute!



BACK IN THE DAY

"It's been great to see how the story and character design teams have expanded the family tree—especially for Branch—introducing these great new personalities, these brothers that we've never met before. Because of the attention that's gone into them, the backstory that we put into them, as soon as we meet them, they feel like they've always been a part of the franchise."
—JAMES THORNTON, HEAD OF CHARACTER

"This film is all about that '90s boy band aesthetic. We looked at a lot of music videos and boy bands from that time period, looking for anything unique for inspiration. It was also a period in the early CG days, when people were trying to do a little bit of CG effects in the videos, so we looked at the raw, unpolished feeling of some of the compositing and other effects that they put in and intentionally replicated some of that for a fun throwback."
—MICHAEL HAMLER, HEAD OF LIGHTING



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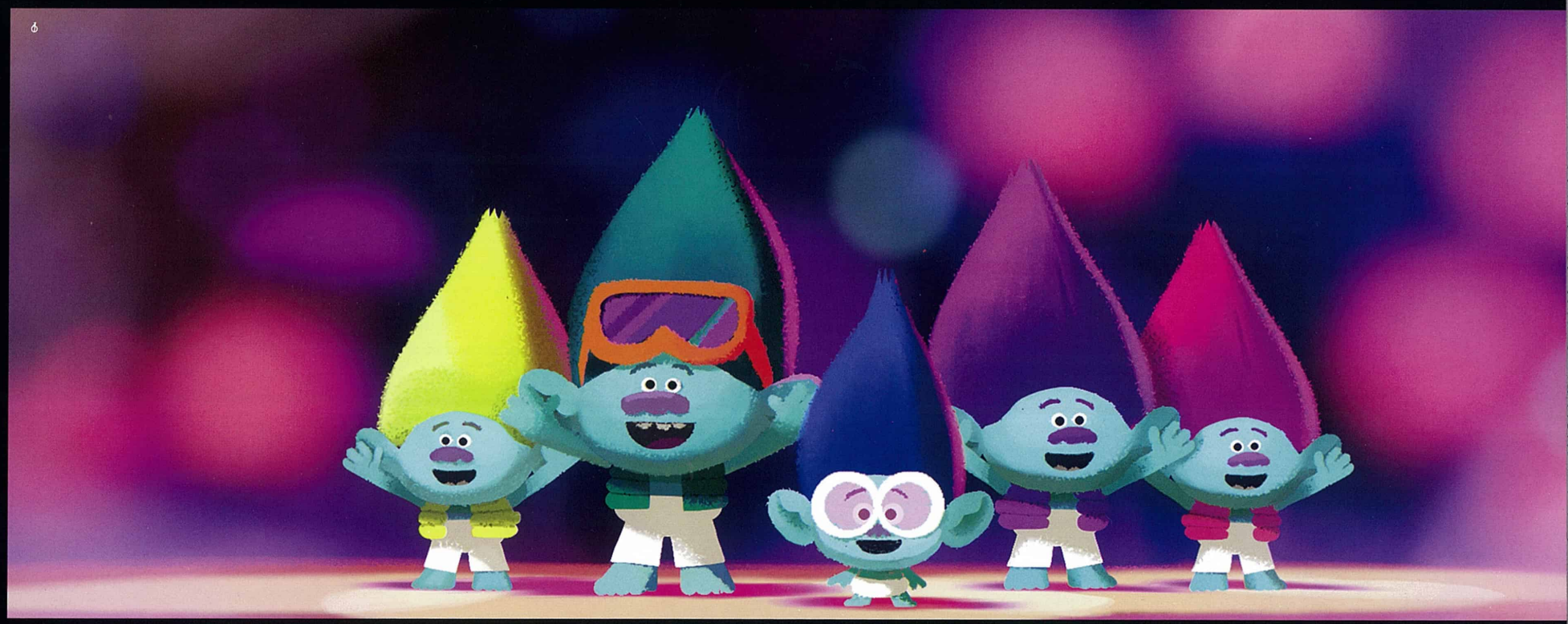

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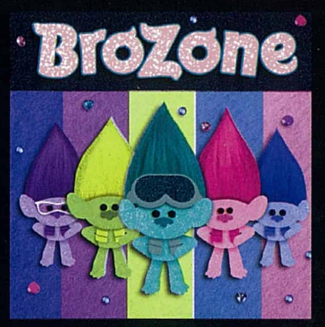

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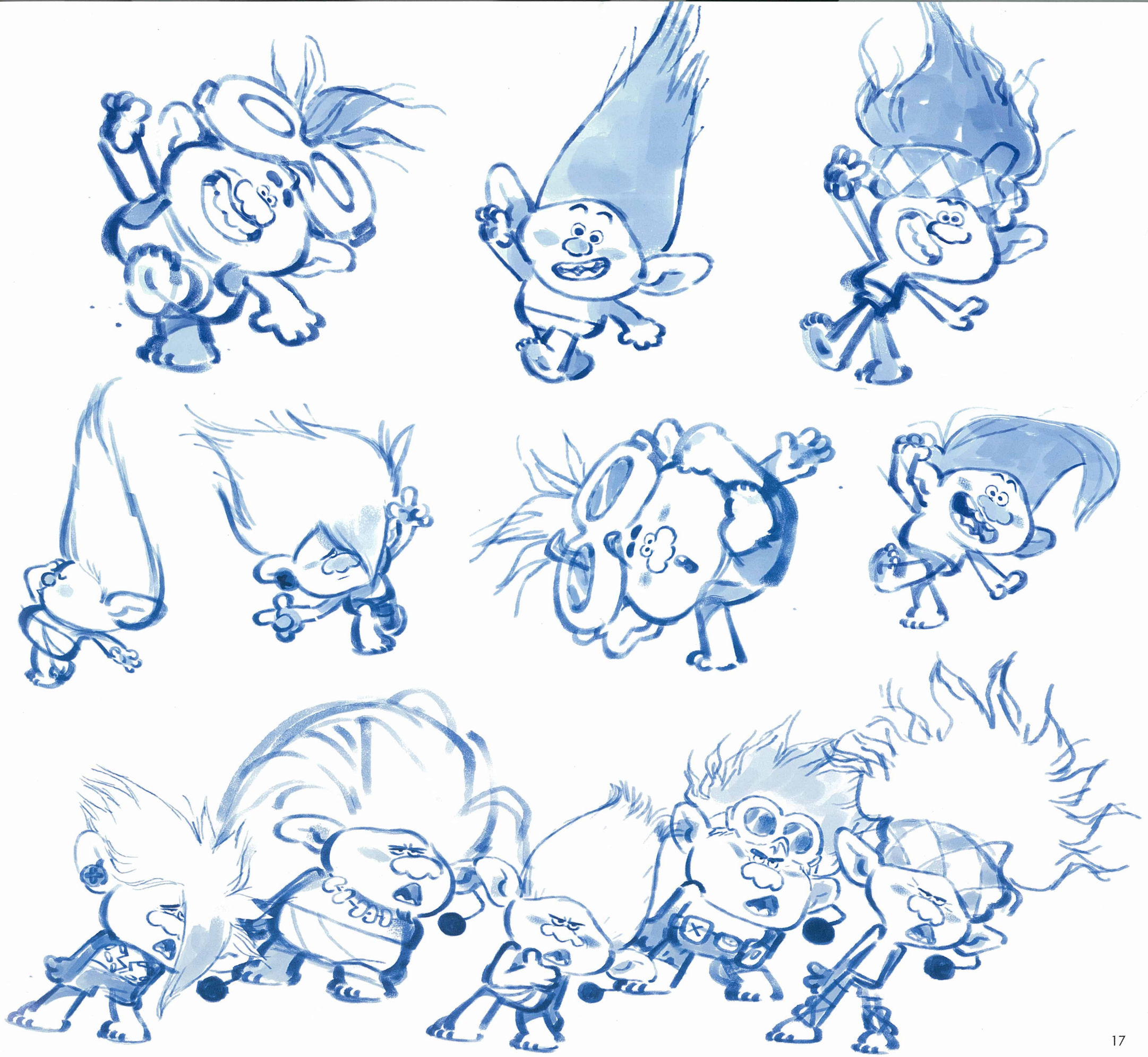
PREVIOUS SPREAD: (LEFT) James Ng; (RIGHT) Production still • 1: Nikolas Ilić • 2–6, 9, 10: Stevie Lewis • 7, 8: James Ng

"I won't lie—every time BroZone dances, I'm all in. There are many scenes I love in this movie, but the homage to the boy band is both hilarious and exhilarating because it's so well done."
—MARGIE COHN, PRESIDENT, DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

THIS SPREAD: *Taylor Krahenbuhl*



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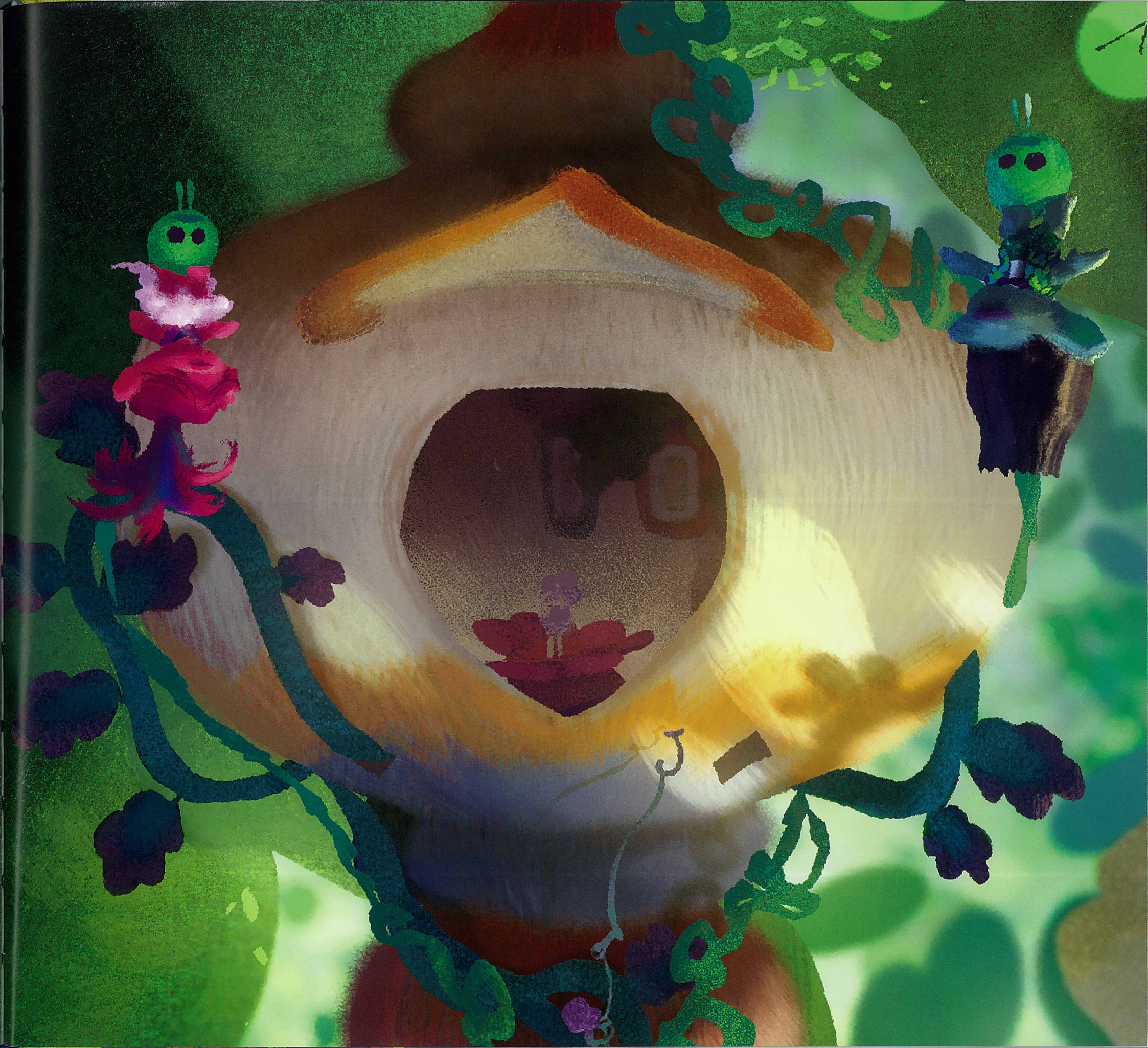
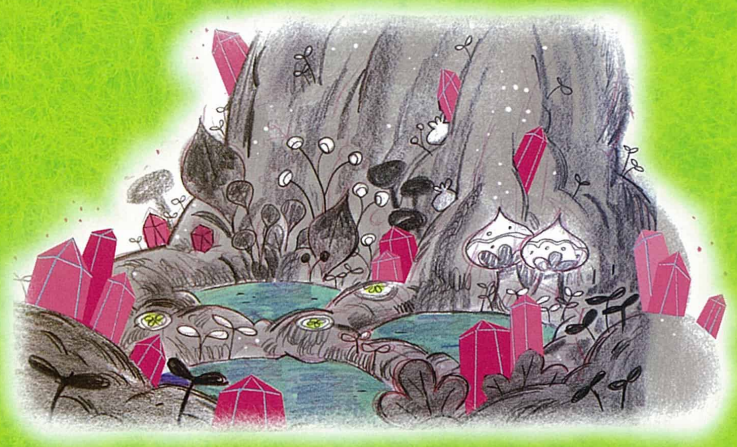
1: James Ng • 2, 4–6, 8: Taylor Krahenbuhl •
3: Nikolas Ilić • 7: Taylor Krahenbuhl & Oscar Ayola

"When the movie opens, we're back at another time before the Bergens attacked, and the brothers are together. We've got the Trolls colors—everything's saturated, and there's lots of hot pinks and purples, and it's a nighttime thing—the goal was to make it a Trolls light show. We introduced crystals for the first time in this set, which is interesting because it sets up what we see later in Mount Rageous, which is nothing *but* gems and crystals."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR



THE TROLLS TREE

Although we only see the stately, time-honored home of the Trolls briefly in *Trolls Band Together*, it plays an important role in setting the stage for the unfolding story. It's here where we're introduced to BroZone—Branch has brothers! He was in a band!—and where we learn how it all fell apart when Branch was just a baby. It's also here where, years later, Branch revisits his old home, Grandma's pod, recalling days gone by.



TROLLS TREE LIFE

"I might be the only one picturing this, but the Trolls Tree almost serves as a beautiful eco-hotel for when the Trolls are visiting Bergen Town!"
—GINA SHAY, PRODUCER

"The Trolls live in these fibrous pods that are teardrop shaped that they've created out of their hair. When we were designing Grandma's pod, we were thinking, *What would we use if it was old? What if it had been built in an era when certain colors weren't available?* We referenced old wool sweaters that have beautiful, subdued palettes and are unique to that era. So we designed the pod to look like an old wool sweater; it has a lot of knit tabletops. That's how it was when Branch was a baby. Then we get to see the pod twenty years later, overgrown with vines, but it still has a lot of the same elements, and Branch goes in there and reminisces about some of the old records that he and his brothers used to sing."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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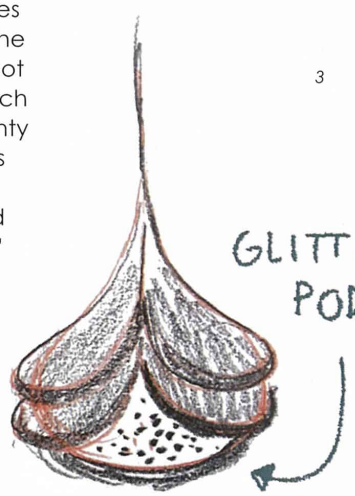

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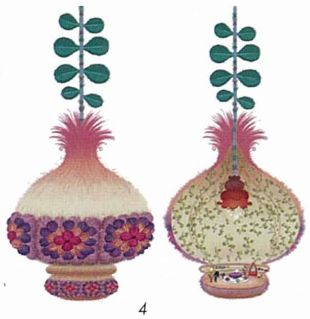
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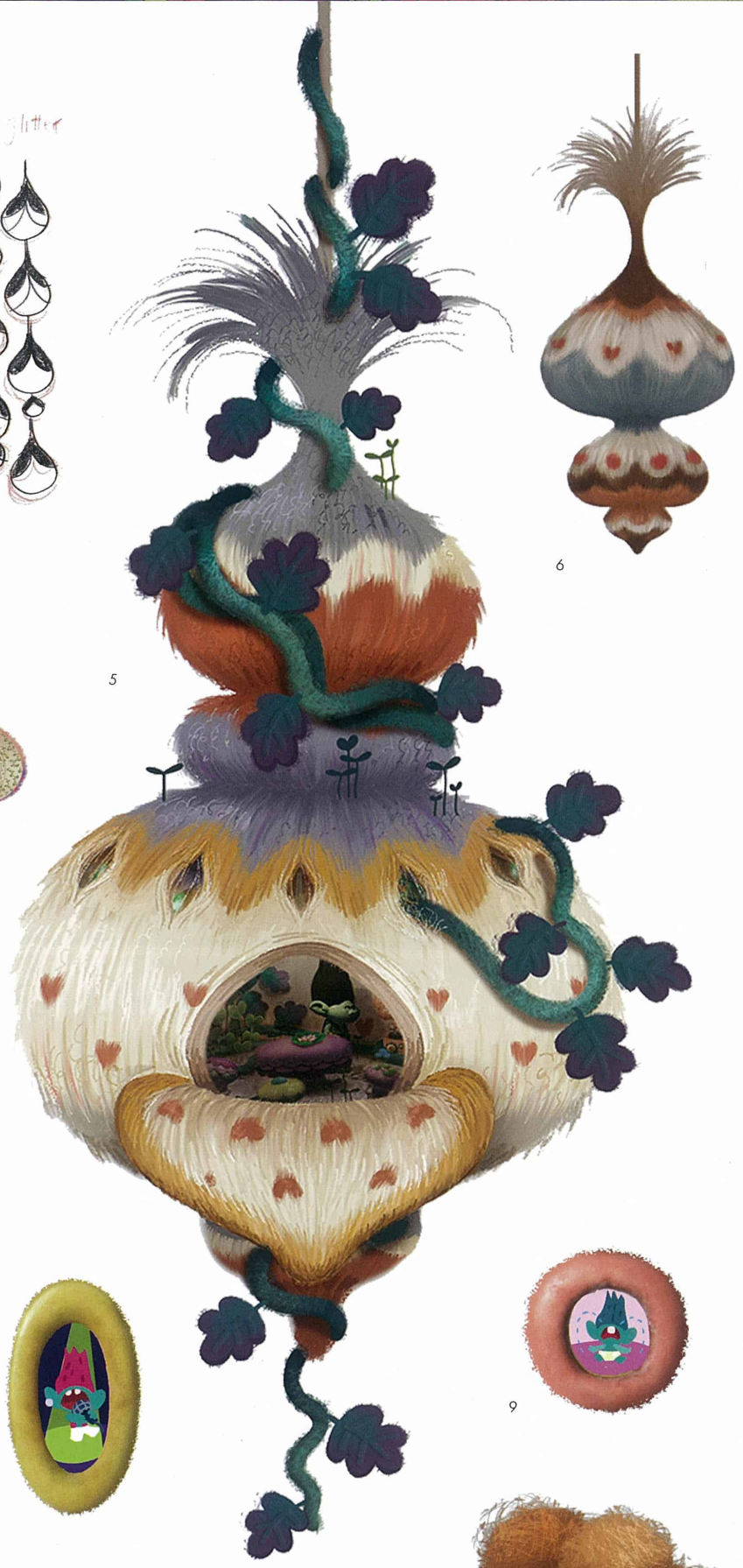
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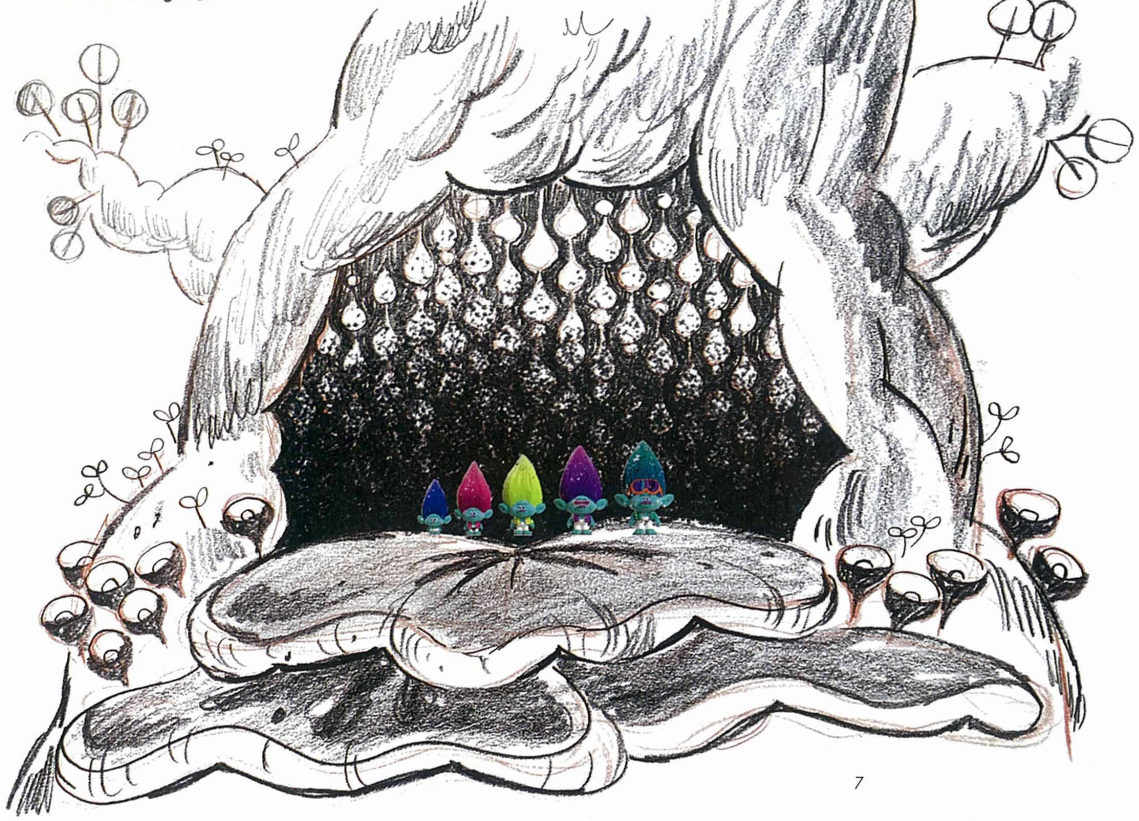
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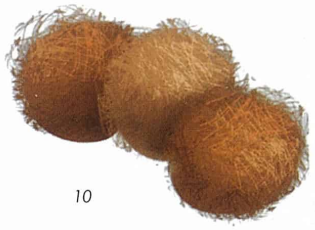
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PREVIOUS SPREAD: (LEFT) Ryan Carlson; (RIGHT) Stevie Lewis • 1, 4–6, 10, 11: Megan Ruiz • 2, 3, 7, 12: Stevie Lewis • 8, 9: Young-Ji Cha • 13: Colin Jack

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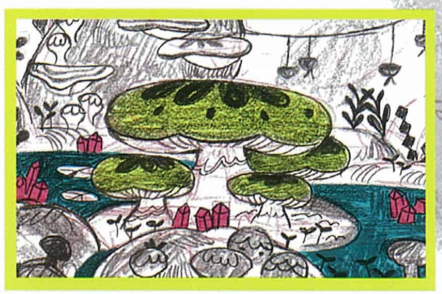
THIS SPREAD: Stevie Lewis

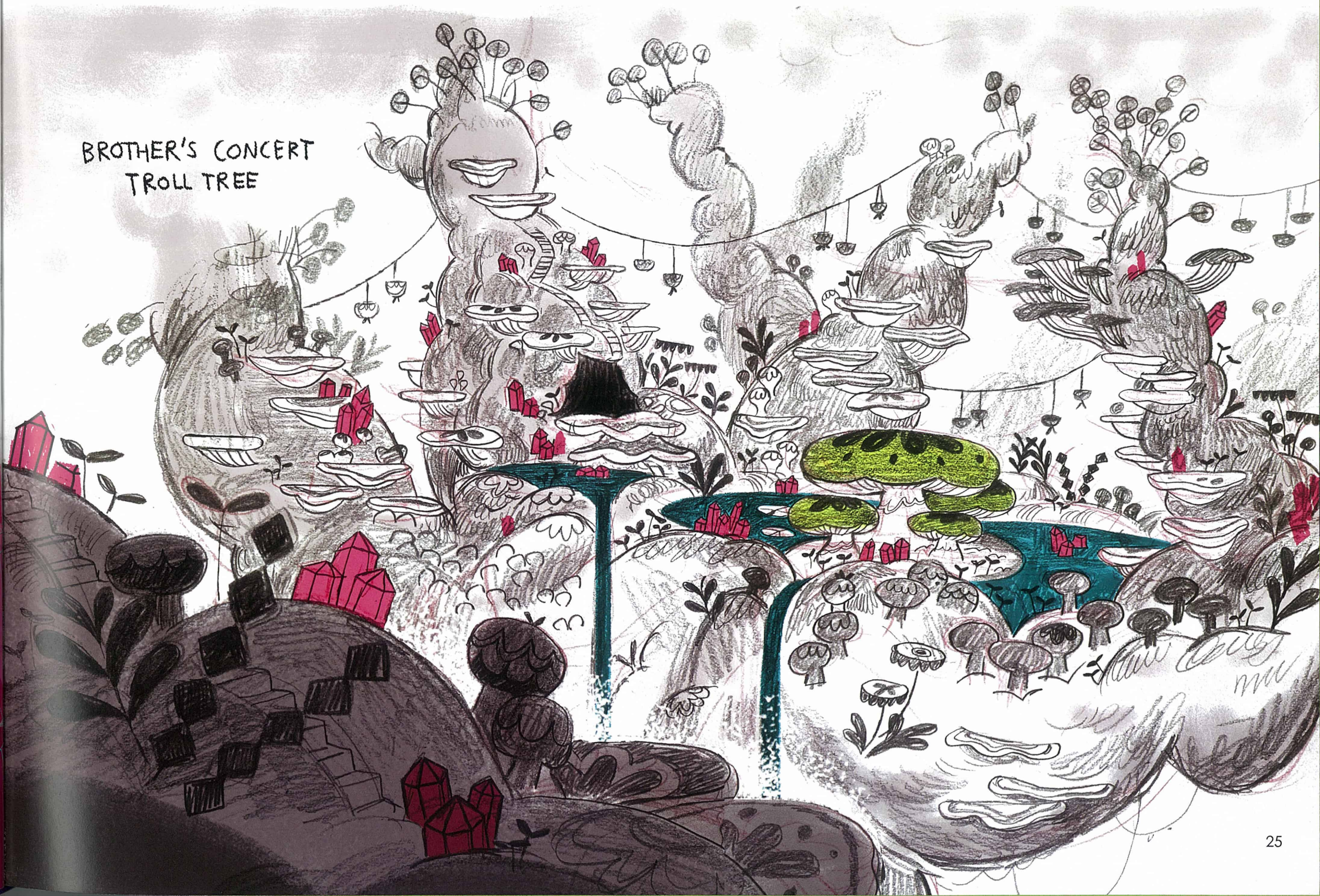
main stage



stage surrounded by water

start

"Lighting on any *Trolls* project is challenging for two reasons. First, there's always the required huge concert sequence, so you've got your crazy concert lighting with spotlights and flashing strobes, and it's all choreographed perfectly with the music. Getting that audio element isn't usually something that we deal with in lighting, but it's really important here that we can match to that and get everything just right. *Trolls* films are also notoriously complex, and this is certainly no exception. Locations and characters on-screen are covered in fuzz and fur and hair, and sometimes they are a challenge to render, let alone look beautiful, so our big challenge on any *Trolls* movie is, how do we even do this?"
—MICHAEL HAMLER, HEAD OF LIGHTING



OLD FRIENDS

"My favorite character is Branch—and not just because he's voiced by Justin Timberlake and he and I share initials! I really like the dark sarcasm and being able to live in the grumpy world, but the love and admiration that he has for Poppy—that duality. For being as solemn as he is, he's still a lot of fun. His being part of a boy band and all the pop and glitter that comes along with that is so counter to what we think of as his personality; he's got layers, and he's just lovable in his own grumpy little way."
—JAMES THORNTON, HEAD OF CHARACTER

"In my book, Poppy—voiced with perfection by Anna Kendrick—is still the strongest female character in the *Trolls* movies because she's so flawed—which we don't see very often in female characters—and she's so fierce. She so unapologetically loves all these girly things; I think it's inspiring. Nothing holds her back."
—SUN YOON, DIGIMATTE SUPERVISOR

1

"What I think is remarkable about Branch is his willingness to put everything aside and drop it all for his brothers, despite what he's got going on in his life. That's really inspiring to me and makes him a very endearing and relatable character."
—MARC SCOTT, VFX SUPERVISOR

1: Young-Ji Cha • 2: Production still • 3: Jeff Hayes (art model) • 4: Timothy Lamb • 5: Craig Kellman • 6: Ryan Carlson • 7: Maya Perez • 8: Taylor Krahenbuhl

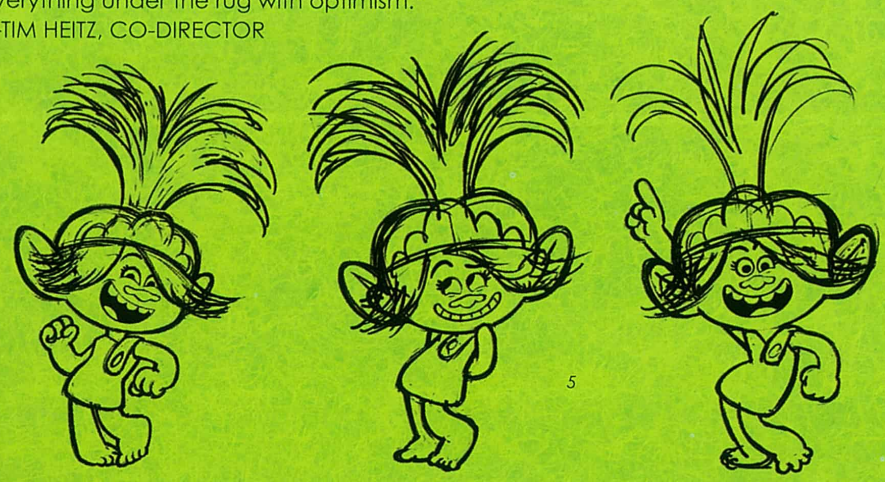
2

3

"Poppy is wearing this dress to the wedding that looks like it's made out of cotton balls; there's a rough cage around it, and it has some controls in there, so it can drag on the ground. There's one shot I remember where she jumps into this room and her dress springs behind her, so the rig controls allow the animators to do that. We went back and forth a lot with animation on that one in particular. Overall, it's a simple rig, but it really looks nice."
—TED FORGRAVE, CHARACTER TD SUPERVISOR

4

"On the outside, Poppy seems like the optimistic, everything-is-great kind of personality, and that's important in how she drives the story forward; she's like, 'Yeah, let's do it! Meeting your family is going to be perfect,' but she comes to realize that it's not always that easy. Sometimes there are complexities within a family dynamic that you really need to work through. You can't just sweep everything under the rug with optimism."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR



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"I identify with Branch. I say this with much love and affection: everyone is ridiculously happy on this crew, and I would admittedly say that I'm kind of a curmudgeon. I will look at stuff and say, 'Well, this could go wrong, or that could go wrong.' I like being proved wrong in all those scenarios, but I tend to be the one who's like, 'Well, we should always examine the things that might go sideways.' It always works out for them, but I've always felt like Branch in those scenarios, and they're all Poppy."
—COLIN JACK, HEAD OF STORY

"Branch is independent, resourceful, and very autonomous. Poppy has learned her lessons along the way somewhat, but she seems to keep forgetting them. I really do like Branch. He's an idealist in the way that he sees the world. He's a bit of a romantic, too."
—JAMES PETERSON, FINAL LAYOUT SUPERVISOR

8

"The best modeling tasks for me are a marriage of the aesthetic and the technical: you know the aesthetic goal you're going for, but what is the most clever and efficient approach to get there? For instance, in this film, Poppy has a new dress that has a coarse knit pattern. There was no way I was going to construct it strand by strand. I thought, *If I make a small woven section, then copy it repeatedly to make a larger sheet, then cut out patterns from it and form them onto the character's shape . . .* and so forth. I worked on that dress, doing different iterations and adjustments, for a couple of weeks. I would go home at night and shut my eyes and see interweaving tubes."

—JEFF HAYES, CHARACTER MODELING SUPERVISOR

3

4

"The Snack Pack isn't in this narrative as much as the other two films. There's so many new characters, and we only have eighty-five minutes! If we get to make another one, there's still more stories to tell with those characters. Even so, this time around, you'll catch Cooper and Prince D in a little moment because they went through the experience of finding a lost sibling. They have a special point of view and can help Branch in that discovery. Guy Diamond has a bit of a role; what does he do with a son who feels like he's too big to be held? Satin and Chenille, the fashion twins, are in there, too. Aino Jawo and Caroline Hjelt, from Icona Pop, are such great singers and really add another layer to the characters."
—WALT DOHRN, DIRECTOR

"I love super simple characters because the animators haven't got much to work with—there's a few blinks, a few mouth shapes. Mr. Dinkles reminds me of Feathers McGraw in the Aardman film *The Wrong Trousers*, the little penguin who dresses up as a chicken. All he's got is a blink, but the amount of acting they get from that simple character is phenomenal. It's the same with Mr. Dinkles; they get a lot from not very much."
—MARTIN COSTELLO, CHARACTER TD SUPERVISOR

1, 2, 5: Production stills • 3, 4: Megan Ruiz (costume)

5

TINY DIAMOND

"We fell in love with Tiny Diamond in the last film. There wasn't a lot of room for him, so we thought, *Let's bring him on the road with us this time and actually give him an arc*. There's a lot of 'your authentic self' that runs through the movie. Tiny Diamond is trying to be an adult and age faster than he is. At the end of the movie, he embraces the moment that he's in now instead of wanting to grow up so fast. It was a good comedic engine, as well as analogous to our own desire to move through time faster."
—WALT DOHRN, DIRECTOR

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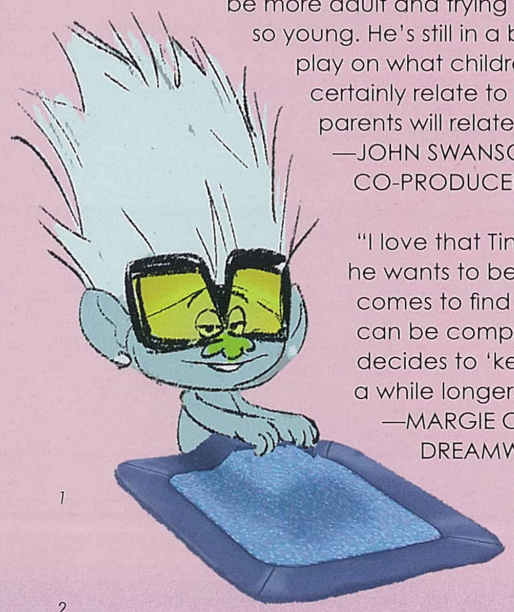
"Tiny Diamond, played by the incomparable Kenan Thompson, is a great character and voice, and he has some of the best gags and jokes in the film. I like how he's evolving; he's trying to be more adult and trying to prove it, and that's always fun to watch. He's still so young. He's still in a baby seat. It's a nice play on what children do; they'll certainly relate to him, and parents will relate to him, too."
—JOHN SWANSON, CO-PRODUCER

"I love that Tiny Diamond thinks he wants to be a 'big boy' but comes to find that grown-up life can be complex and hard and decides to 'keep it baby' for a while longer."
—MARGIE COHN, PRESIDENT, DREAMWORKS ANIMATION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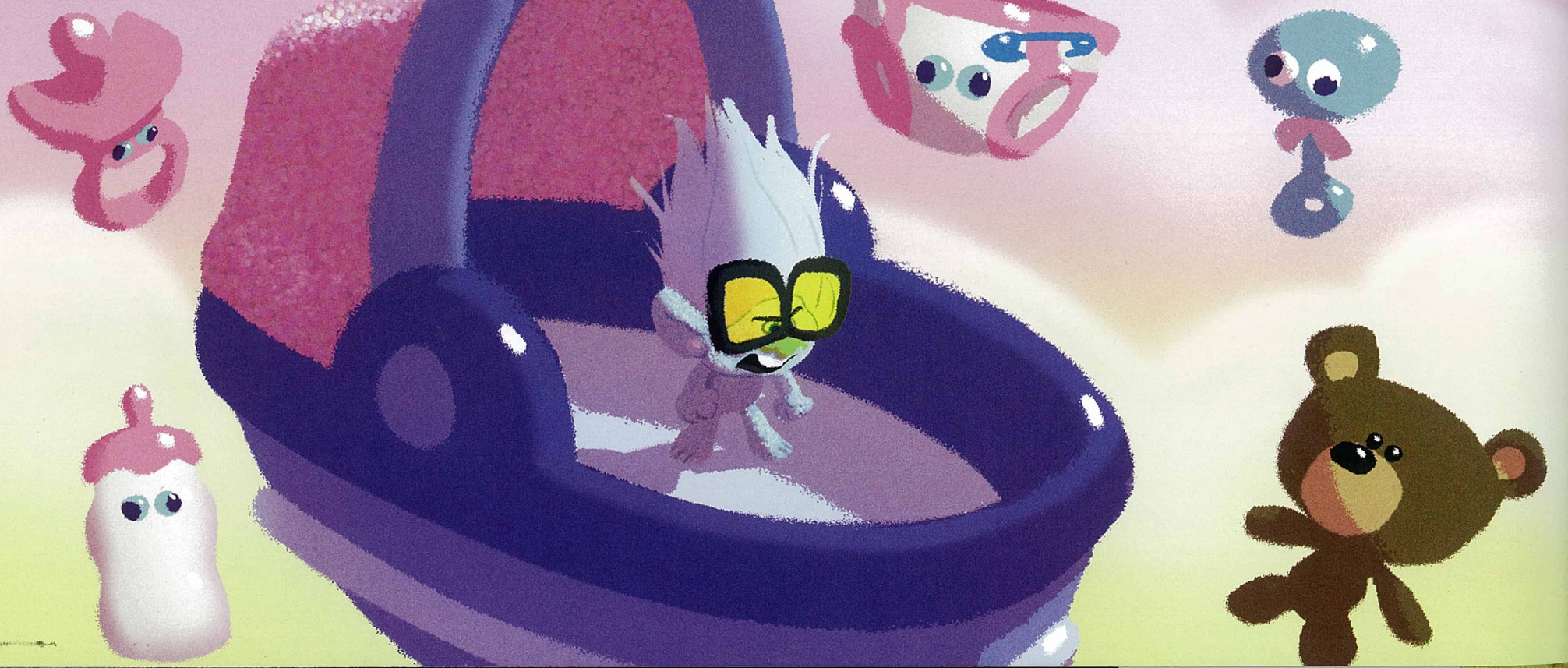
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1, 2, 7–9: James Ng • 3: Ryan Gerrish • 4: Yung-Lo Chang & Dave Cooper • 5: Ryan Gerrish (design) • 6: Tom MacDougall (model) • 10: Dave Cooper

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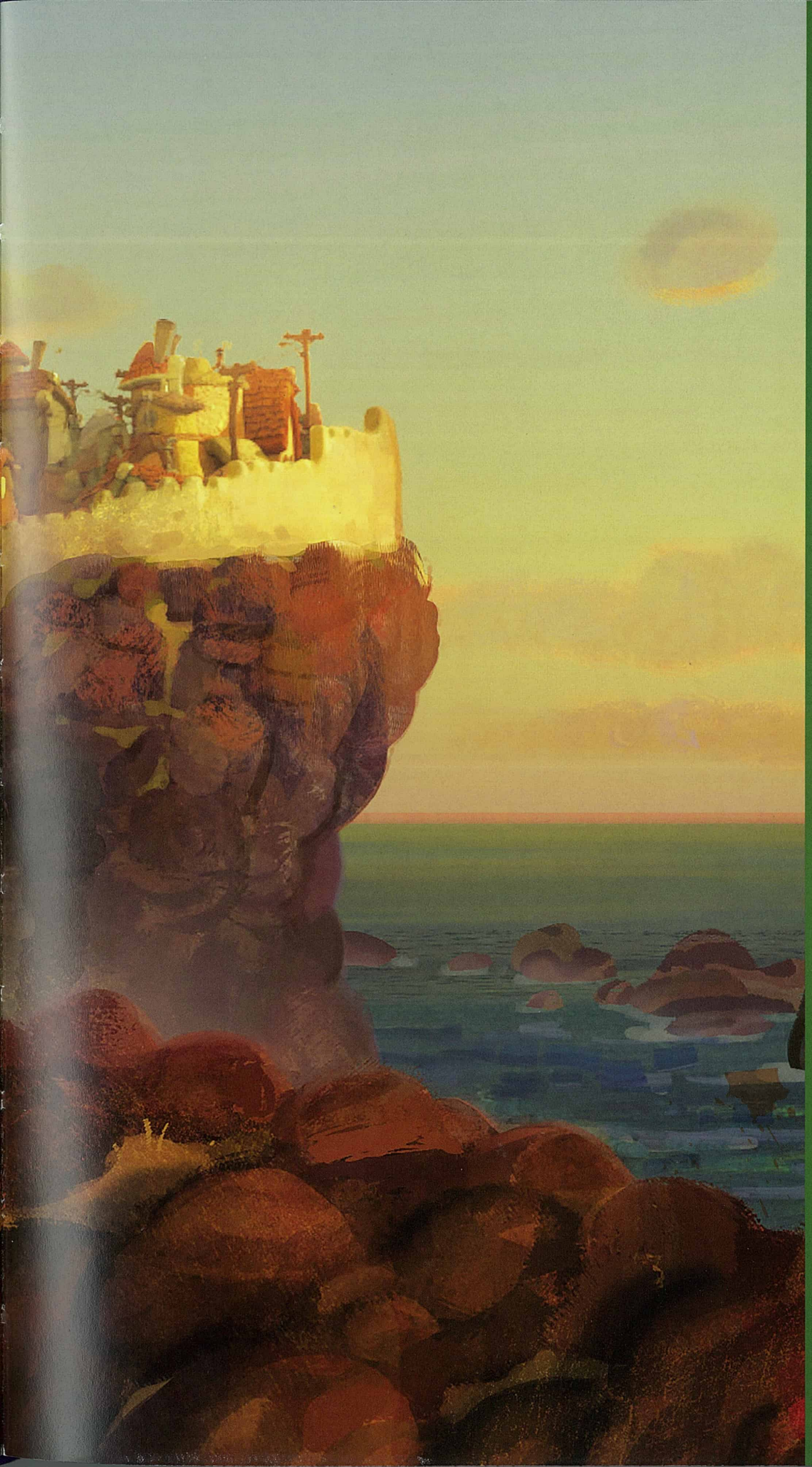

FAMILIAR TERRITORY

Bergen Town still has its signature '70s aesthetic—everything is crude, chunky, and thick—but these days, it's a livelier, happier, more colorful place. And why not? Between the Bergens' newfound friendship with the Trolls and the imminent marriage of Bridget and King Gristle, they have a lot to be celebrating! It's also John Dory's first stop in his quest to get his brothers back together. When he has convinced the reluctant Branch (with Poppy's help) to join the cause, they hit the road in Rhonda, John Dory's versatile pet/vehicle, driven by the irrepressible Tiny Diamond.

BERGEN TOWN

"I'm excited the Bergens are back. It's a really fun opportunity to see how they're different. King Gristle and Bridget—played once again by Christopher Mintz-Plasse and Zooey Deschanel—are getting married! Poppy gets to be a part of that, and she brings 110 percent to everything, so you know it's going to be big. It's fun to see the Bergens moving on, their partnership with the Trolls now, and them being happier, which is a stark contrast to the first film."
—CASSANDRA FANNING, HEAD OF LOCATIONS

"I really enjoyed going back to Bergen Town, which was such a big part of the first film and one of the reasons why we fell in love with the franchise. It's very different now. Whereas Bergen Town was previously this desolate place that no one wanted to go to, everything has changed now that the Bergens are friends with Trolls. Creating a giant, beautiful wedding and a happy, newly revived Bergen Town was a really fun endeavor."
—MARC SCOTT, VFX SUPERVISOR

"*Trolls* movies are like travel films; they go everywhere! I like that we are starting from Bergen Town in this film, though. It gives it something that's more grounded. Bergen Town is the same as it was in the first movie, but it's a lot more vibrant because of the wedding. There are lots of decorations everywhere, and the carpets are rolled out."
—SUN YOON, DIGIMATTE SUPERVISOR

"We don't spend that much time in Bergen Town. We're there for the wedding, and the Trolls have spruced up the place; it's like they've opened the window and some fresh air has come in. It's a joyous place—there's popping colors and lots of white and sunshine, and of course, the Snack Pack and Poppy are there. There's lots of hits of what you would associate with Trolls Village. Here's the beautiful thing: when you look at Trolls Village, it's like looking at a whole bowl of colorful candy. Even with all these popped colors in Bergen Town, my production designer did a really good job of keeping its original charm—the clay pots, the '70s-inspired shag, the old TV wood paneling—and pulling those warm colors to blend with the Trolls colors. It's a perfect mesh of the Trolls world and the Bergen world."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR

PREVIOUS SPREAD: (LEFT) Ryan Carlson; (RIGHT) Ryan Gerrish
• 1, 2, 6, 7: Ryan Carlson • 3–5: Ryan Gerrish

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BRIDGET

"The day Bridget gets married, we see her try on some dresses, and the humor is that the dresses and makeup are ridiculous. She's got crazy, big hair and all kinds of DIY tape and bows. We leave that scene with the audience thinking that's how she's going to get married, and then later on she actually comes down in a wedding dress made of balloons."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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"The wedding dress needed to feel like it was actually made of balloons: it needed to have that pressure; it needed to interact and to have that feeling that one balloon is actually colliding with another one. Before that, she tries on different dresses, so there are three other costumes that we had to make her wear just for single shots."
—PRADIPTO SENGUPTA,
CFX SUPERVISOR

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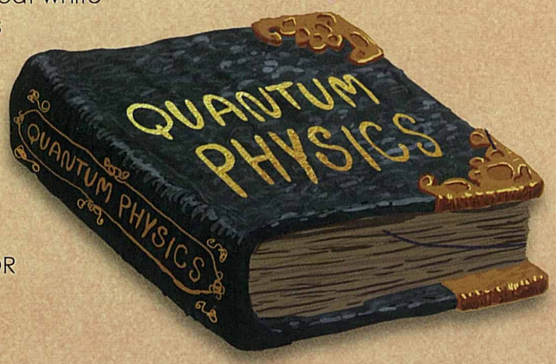
1, 6, 7: Craig Kellman • 2–5: Yung-Lo Chang (model); Ryan Gerrish (costume design) • 8: Character render

ROYAL LIFE

"Despite her toughness, Bridget still has a space to be girly: that's her thing, and so we filled the room with a lot of that, but we also added a little bit of the other side of her personality, where she can be a little bit of a brute—really strong and tough. Doing Bergen design is fun because you can just let things melt and sag or shift to different sides. Bergen design is really like your favorite ugly clay mug that you've been using for twenty years; we just applied that to Bridget's room and all the things she loves."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR

"Bridget has always felt like she straddles two worlds. We saw that in the first film where she is really not 100 percent Bergen-like; she likes things that are beautiful and likes things that are represented by the Trolls. We wanted to make sure her room still had that Bergen quality while making it look less dingy, and there was some sort of playfulness to it. In the first *Trolls* film, she lived as a scullery maid in the basement, and she tried to dress up her area; for this film, we brought in a lamp and a couple of other things that reflect where she used to live. Now she's got this great white-washed wood furniture. She looks like a typical teenager in many ways. She's got music tapes scattered around; it's a callback to the '80s, and you can see her love for music and scrapbooking."
—MATTHEW PAULSON,
LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR



THIS SPREAD: Ryan Gerrish

KING GRISTLE

"King Gristle has new outfits in this film. He has a new tropical inspired print that he wears now, along with his cape and crown. I would describe his style as casual king attire."
—ANDY HARBECK, CHARACTER SURFACING SUPERVISOR

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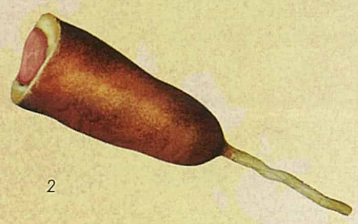

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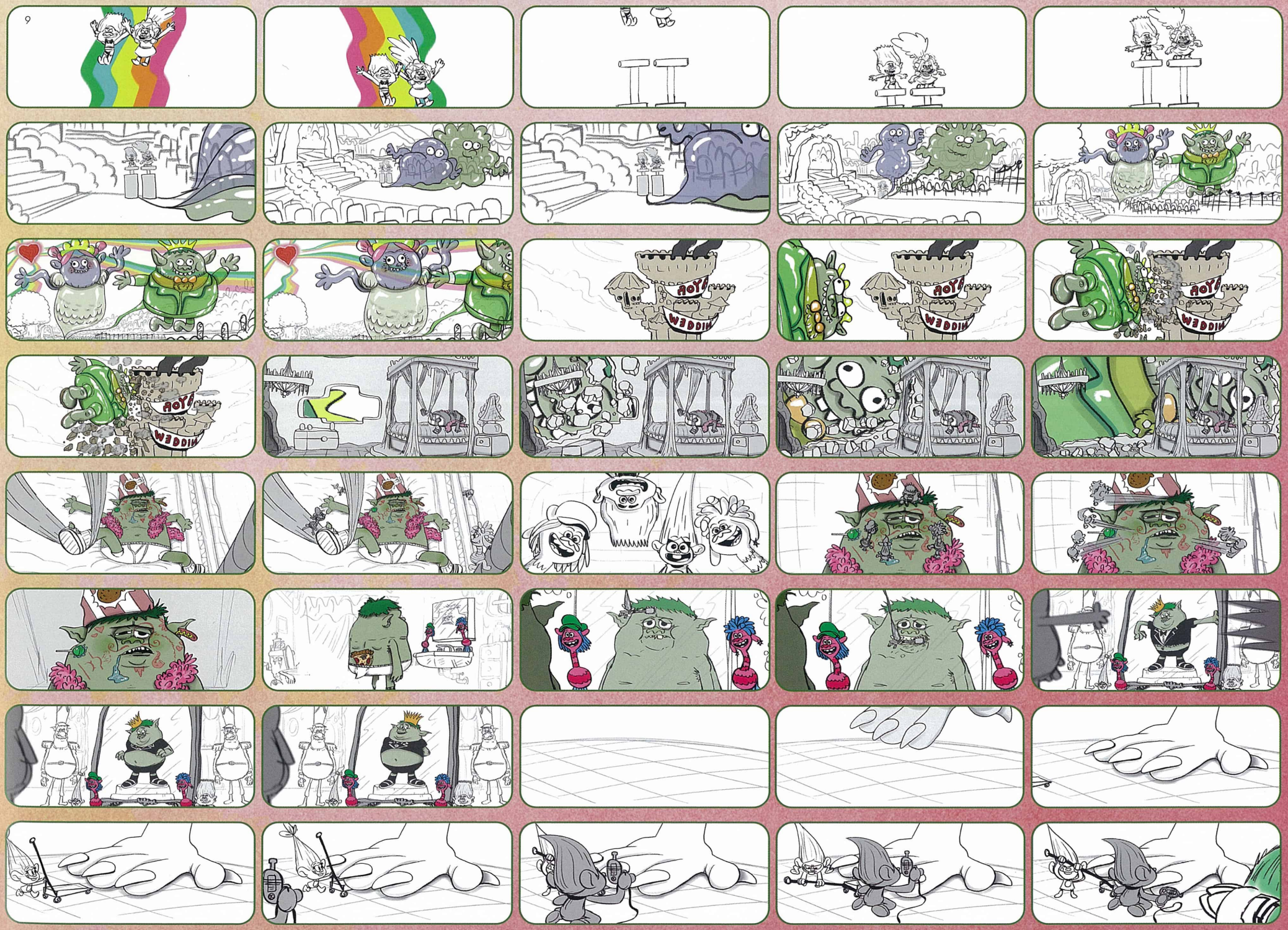
1, 3, 6: Craig Kellman (character design); Ryan Gerrish (costume design) • 2, 5, 7: Ryan Gerrish • 4: Craig Kellman (design) • 8: Ryan Carlson • 9: Chris Heltzel

"It's the morning of Bridget and King Gristle's wedding when we arrive at each of their bedrooms. First, we see Bridget getting ready, and Poppy and the Snack Pack are helping her select dresses. Then we get to King Gristle's room, and we find him after the bachelor party with a big pizza slice in his pants and a chicken bucket on his head—he had a blast the night before. He wakes up and, of course, all the Trolls and the other Bergens are helping him get ready."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

"That room is classic King Gristle. He and his friends went to town. His room is funny because of his ridiculously sized bed and his plushie, Wingdingle. Whereas Bridget's room is this cozy place where the girls are just having a blast, King Gristle's room is messier and much more chaotic."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR



THE WEDDING

"There's a one-liner when John Dory, who nobody knows at this point, shows up, and it's revealed that this is Branch's brother—a brother he hasn't seen since he was a baby and nobody knew that he had. Bridget and King Gristle are at the altar, and King Gristle says something like, 'Who's that?' and Bridget says, 'I can't remember all my suitors, Grissy.' That humor is so great. It's got something for everybody. Maybe the kids don't understand that, but that's going to get a laugh from their moms and dads. That's another thing about this franchise that's so wonderful."
—CASSANDRA FANNING, HEAD OF LOCATIONS

1, 6: Ryan Carlson • 2: Production still • 3, 5, 7, 8: Ryan Gerrish • 4: Ryan Gerrish (costume design); Brian Jefcoat (art model)

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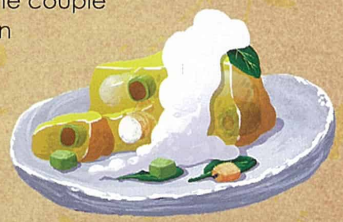
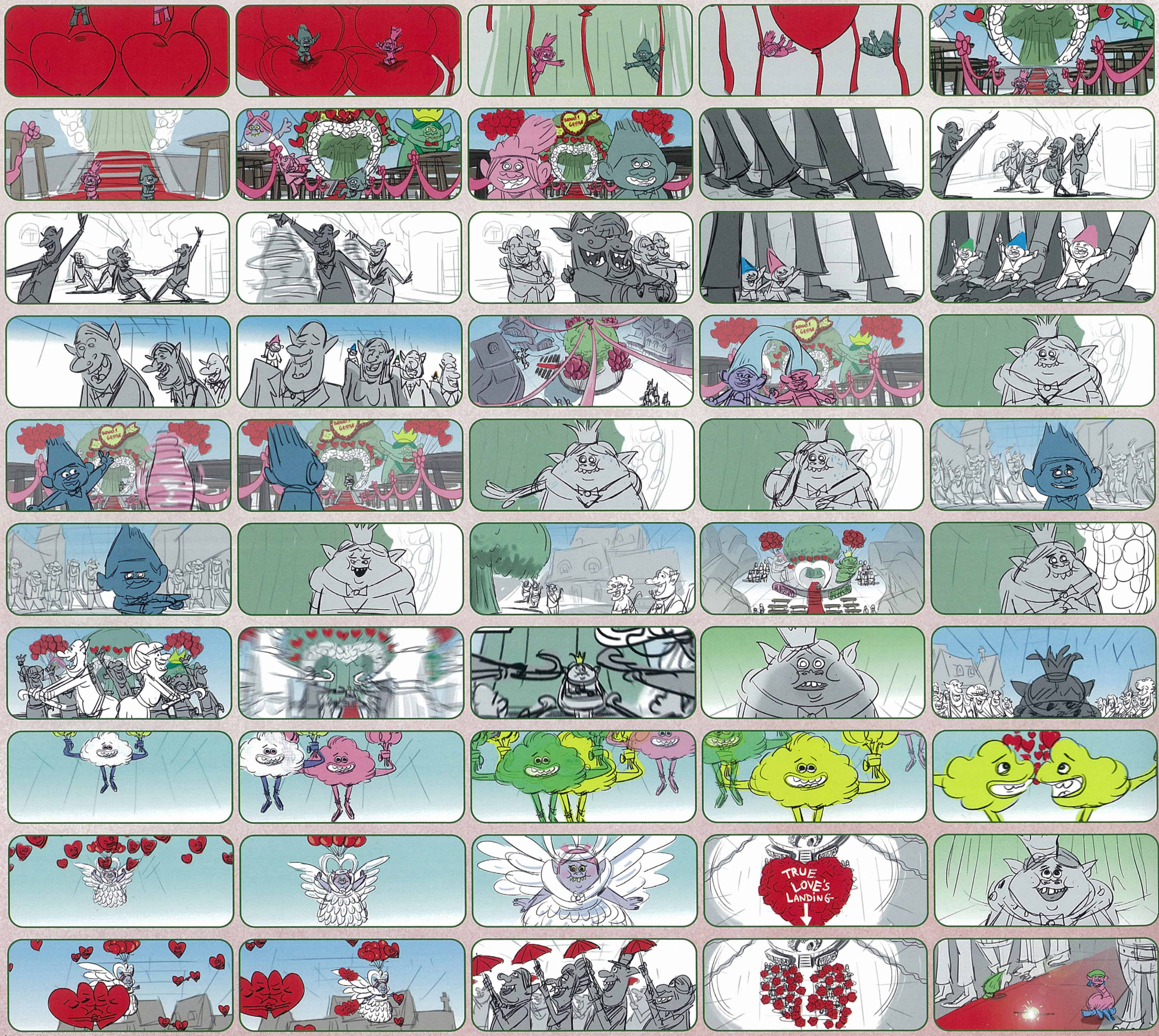
"I'm glad we brought the Bergens back and that we got to do a lot of the Bergens in the wedding sequence. It's nice to revisit those characters; they're no longer a threat, and we just get to be with them as nonthreatening characters in the movie. There are wedding spectators, so we needed a whole wedding audience. From a crowds perspective, it's our bread-and-butter work; it's populating an environment with a single layout and then just making sure all the characters are doing the actions that are appropriate for the shots that are going on; a lot of loving, happy looks for the couple getting married. But when the wedding gets interrupted with the introduction of John Dory, for the remainder of the sequence, there's a lot of bewildered looks from characters who are unsure of what's happening. We just use the same layout throughout both sequences that the wedding takes place across, and it's really just a matter of getting all the characters to have the right performance that we're looking for."
—SPENCER KNAPP, CROWDS SUPERVISOR




TRUE LOVE'S LANDING

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"We're all huge fans of RuPaul. It was an honor to get him over here to play the wedding officiant. We let him do whatever he wanted, essentially. We gave him the character; we gave him the design. We said, 'Here's the part of the story that we want you to convey,' and he just went for it. It's so funny, and it was such a fun day. This movie is just brimming with ideas and surprises."
—WALT DOHRN, DIRECTOR

1: Darren Webb • 2–5: Eric Kim (crowds animator) • 6: Ryan Gerrish (costume design); Jeff Hayes (art model) • 7, 8: Ryan Gerrish • OVERLEAF: Ryan Carlson

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Trolls
Band Together
RAGE DOME

Bruce's Cantina

JOHN DORY

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"John Dory is the self-appointed leader of BroZone, and because of that, we had to explore what that meant for his character and how that would manifest into certain traits. There was also this idea that John Dory had been alone ever since the band split up, so we asked ourselves, what would it look like if a character didn't interact with other people for many years? We decided that John Dory wouldn't necessarily make eye contact, or he'd be concentrating on something else and maybe seem somewhat aloof, but it didn't mean he wasn't paying attention. Drawing inspiration from Walt's brother, we went with the idea that John Dory just fills up a room—he takes up space, so all of his gestures are big and expressive. He's not slow and meandering; he can sometimes be explosive and quick, and he also has some range where he can be a little bit more sensitive and toned down, but for the most part, when he walks into a room, he's almost unaware of how much space he takes up. His appearance is similar to the other brothers. We thought of the brothers in terms of very basic shape language. John Dory was much more of a square shape."
—BENJAMIN WILLIS, HEAD OF CHARACTER ANIMATION

2

"John Dory has these tiny goggles on top of his head all the time, which is a fun challenge for CFX because we always have to make sure that the goggles are interacting with his hair, and it looks correct."
—PRADIPTO SENGUPTA, CFX SUPERVISOR

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1, 2, 4–8: Taylor Krahenbuhl
• 3: Character render

"John Dory is my favorite new character. There's something about his clueless confidence, even when he doesn't actually have the answer, that is very fun to watch—and seeing how much Branch is annoyed by him is a lot of fun as well. John Dory also goes through a great transformation in the story. Seeing him finally accept his brothers for who they have become and his handing over the leader role to Branch is really satisfying."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

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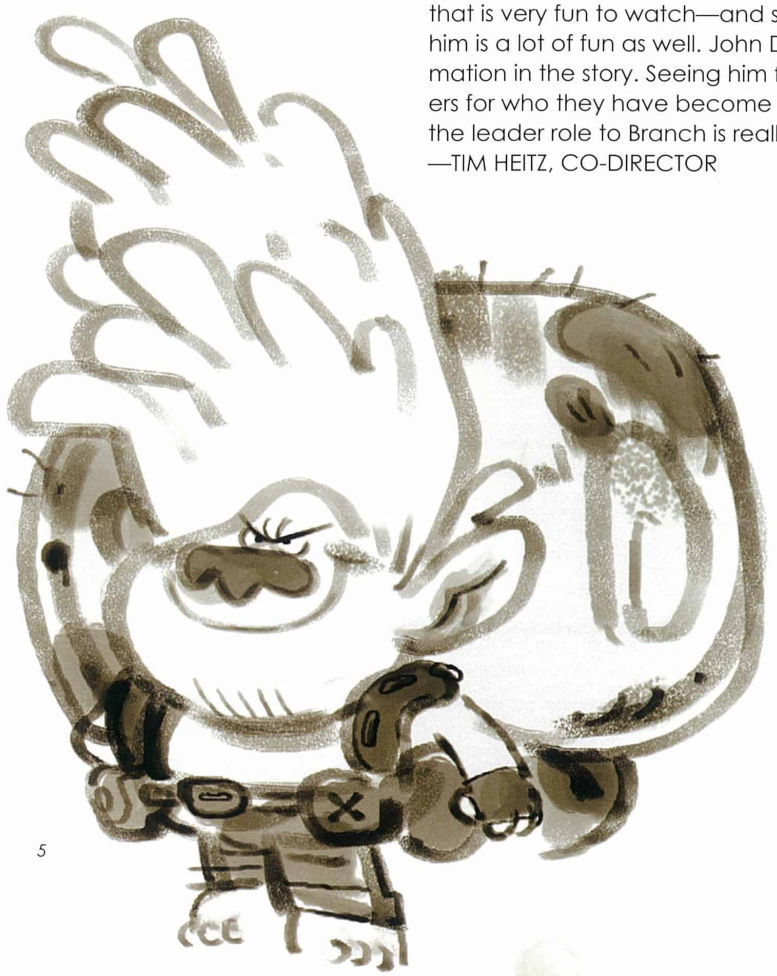

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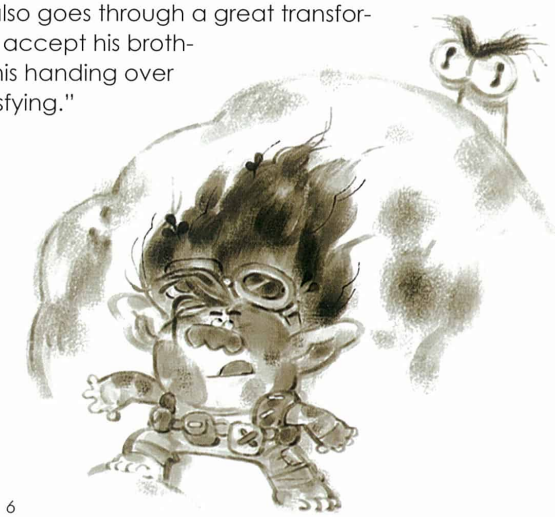

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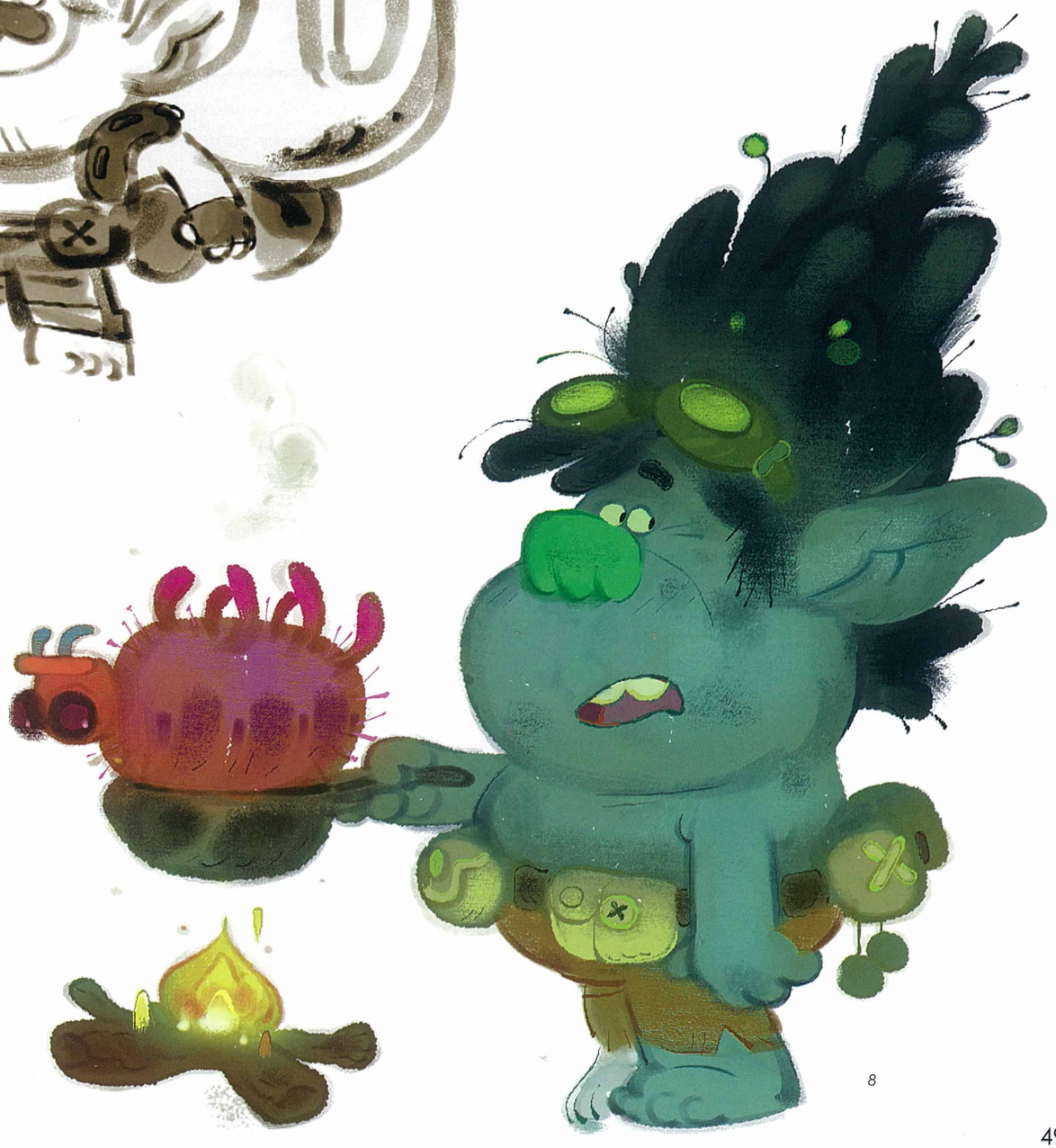


8

Agile

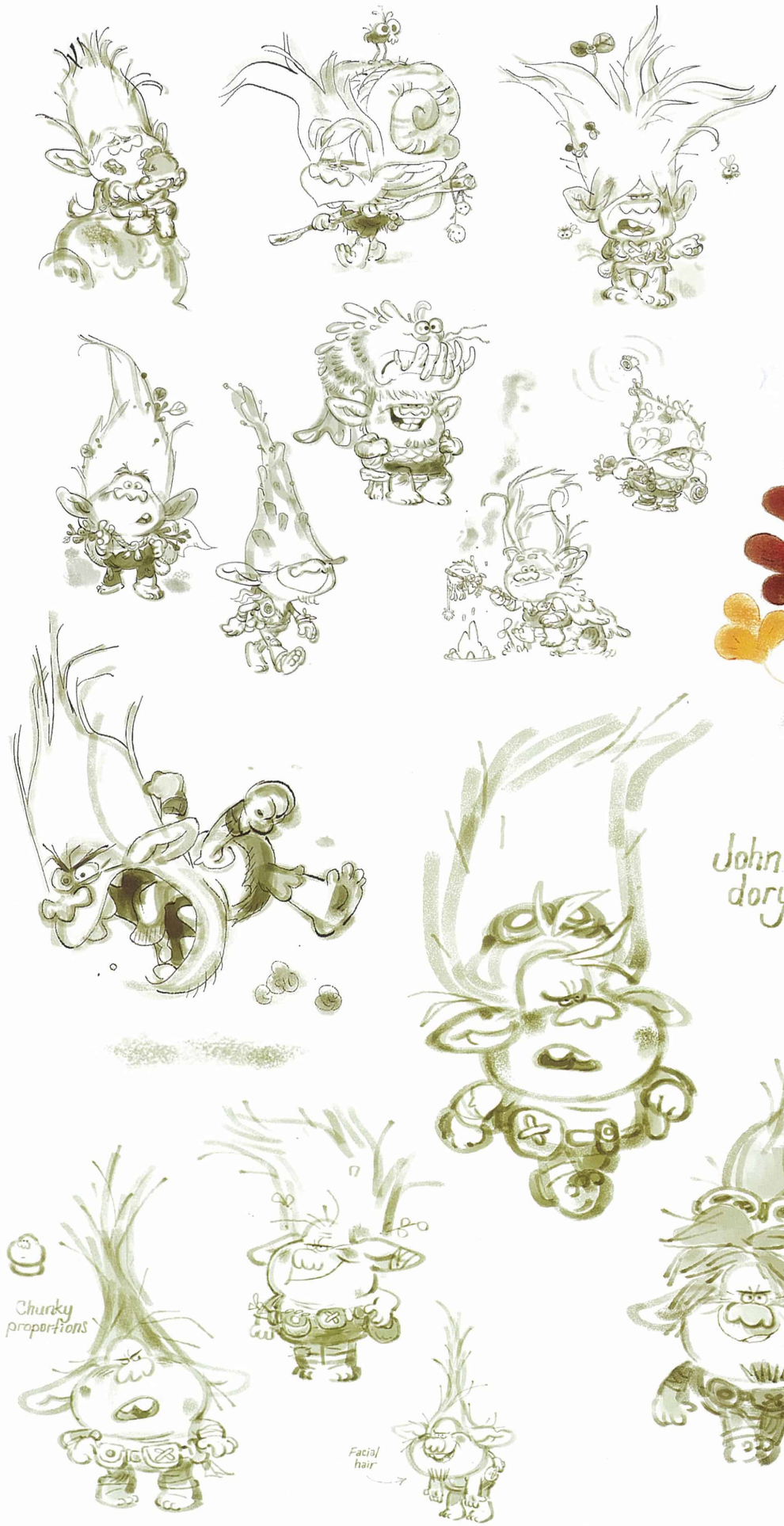
Strong

focused

Confident

Chunky and thick proportions

John dory can move and balance himself like a wild animal



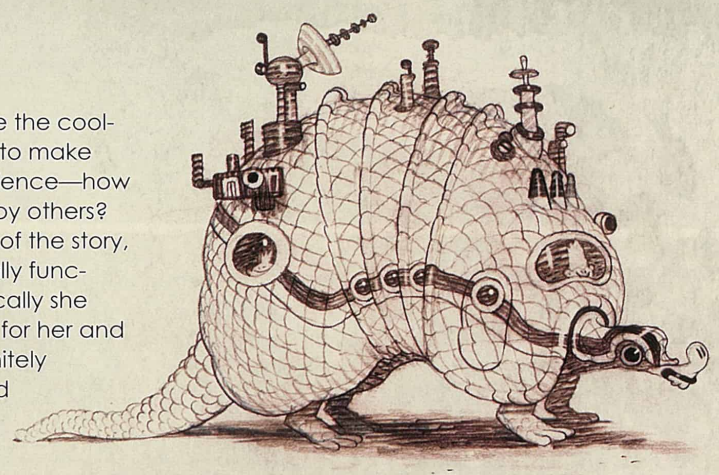
"He's an outdoorsy, *MacGyver* kind of guy. Early on, we talked about him being really resourceful and somebody who might camp out in the middle of nowhere. His coffee mug is made out of a soup can. He has what you would expect somebody to have if that person lived out of an RV."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

"I wasn't really familiar with Eric André before he was the voice of John Dory, but Walt loved the wackiness and craziness of him, and when we recorded him, I couldn't believe it. I thought he was so fantastic, and it was such a pleasure cutting him into the film, especially that first scene where John Dory arrives: he picks Branch up, gets a charley horse, and says, 'Oh, I've got two charley horses!' But Eric says, 'I've got a whole herd of charley horses!' Such a brilliant improviser! In animation, some stick to the script, and others really want to push it and improvise; he was definitely one of the latter, so it became really fantastic to cut that in, and that has really pulled that character together."
—NICK FLETCHER, LEAD EDITOR

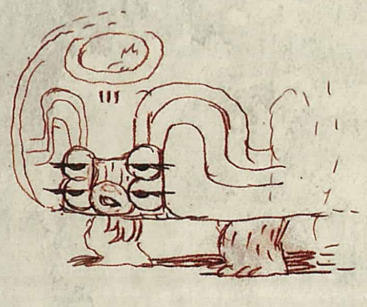
THIS SPREAD: *Taylor Krahenbuhl*

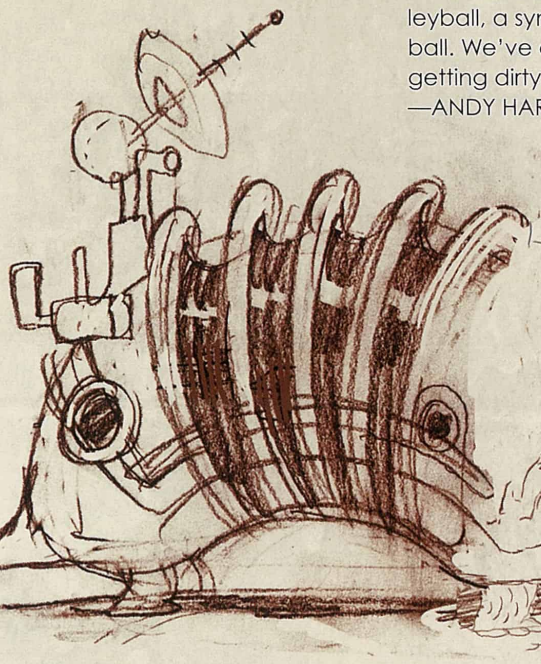
RHONDA

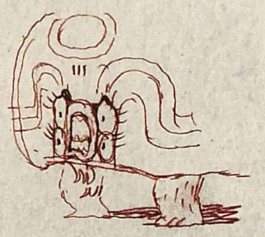
"The initial pitch for Rhonda was that she is supposed to be the coolest vehicle that you could imagine. We've tried very hard to make her fun and energetic. There's always this balance of sentience—how much does she drive herself, and how much is she driven by others? We tailored every moment to fit our needs and the needs of the story, so I'm not sure we're totally consistent with how she actually functions, but we're okay living in that gray area. While technically she was complex because of all the different controls we had for her and all the different things that we needed her to do, she definitely was a really fun character to play around with, to then find that middle ground of just how anthropomorphic she should be. That's the story of animation on *Trolls*: the style is so flexible, and the choices we have are so broad that we could make the right choices for the characters depending upon the moment."
—BENJAMIN WILLIS, HEAD OF CHARACTER ANIMATION

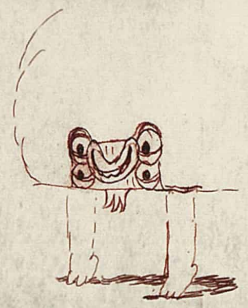


"Rhonda's outer surface is the same material that is used on a soccer ball or a volleyball, a synthetic leather; she even has some patterning similar to that of a soccer ball. We've added little bits of dirt and cracks underneath where she would be getting dirty or scraping up on things to try to tell the story of her texturally as well."
—ANDY HARBECK, CHARACTER SURFACING SUPERVISOR

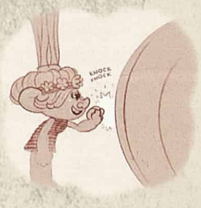


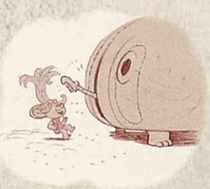


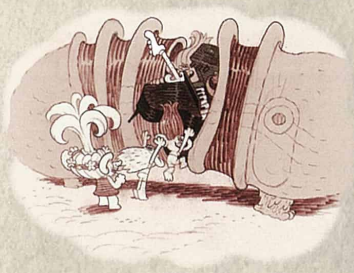


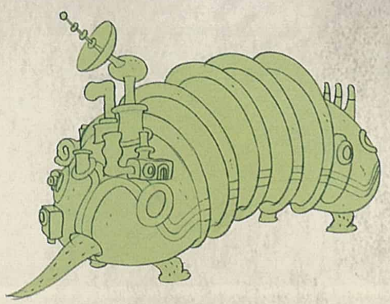


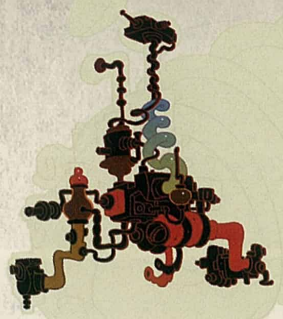
THIS SPREAD: Dave Cooper

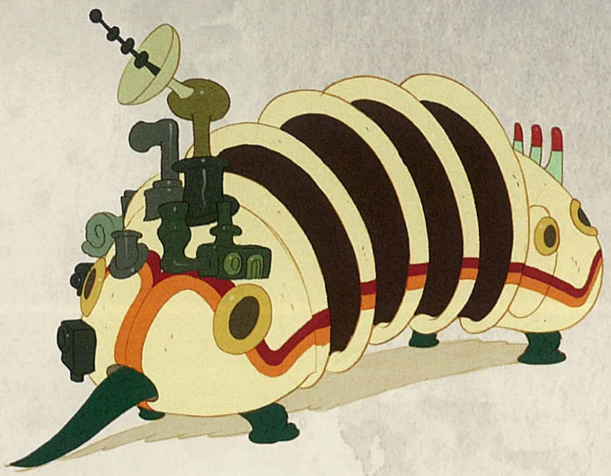












"Rhonda is so cool. The outside of Rhonda really looks like a creature: she's got legs, she's got a face, she can move, and then the inside of Rhonda looks more like a set. You don't really get the sense that there's intestines or anything in there—it's a living space for Trolls. John Dory's got this really big driving chair in the front, and Tiny Diamond ends up driving it, so he's got a baby chair inside another baby chair. Because Tiny Diamond is so small, we had to design a separate steering wheel, which ended up popping out of the horn."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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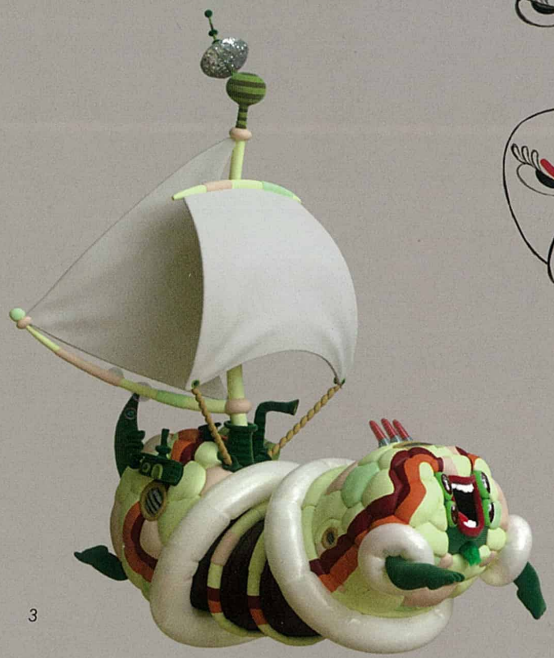

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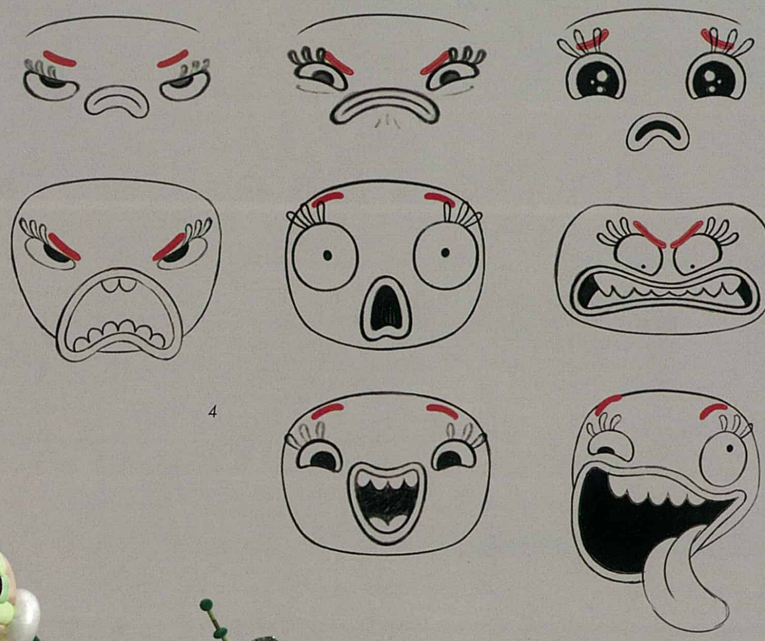

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"Rigging Rhonda is definitely a joint effort between rigging and CFX. You know the accordion-type sections in the middle of some public buses? Rhonda has three of them. We did those from the inside; CFX helped with the pipes that join the sections."
—TED FORGRAVE, CHARACTER TD SUPERVISOR

6

"John Dory has been keeping a lot of the boy band memorabilia inside Rhonda. He has magazines of their concerts and postcards and costume elements, and he's going to try to get the band back together and into their costumes. What happens inside Rhonda is that Branch comes up with all kinds of clues from these magazines that help them get to where they need to go. He rips them up and puts all the clues—which are so funny and ridiculous—together on a board. He's making connections from everywhere."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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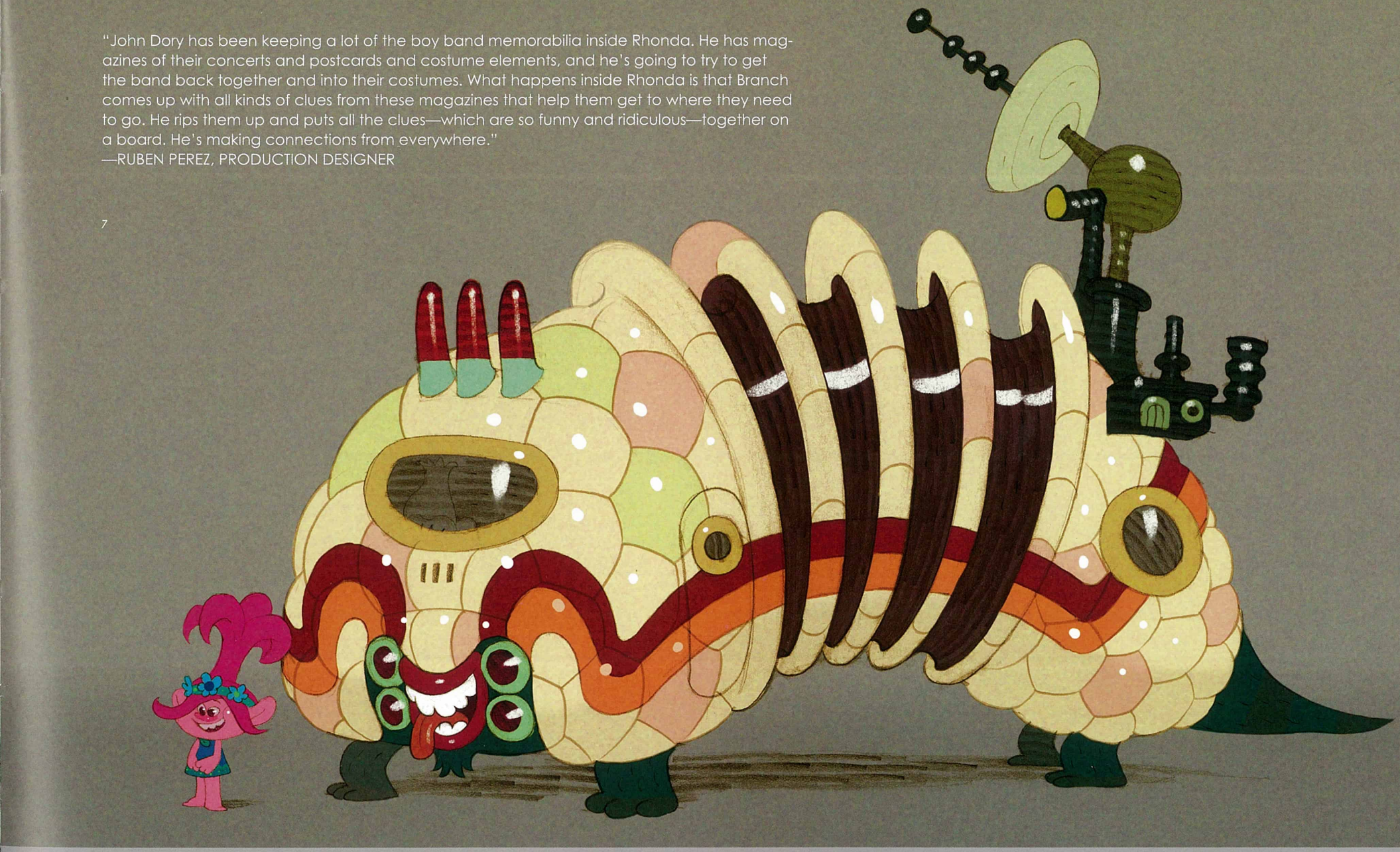

1–3, 5: Yung-Lo Chang (art model) • 4: Craig Kellman • 6: Taylor Krahenbuhl & Craig Kellman (character design); Jeff Hayes (art model) • 7: Dave Cooper • 8: Ryan Carlson

8

THIS SPREAD: Dave Cooper

"Our surfacing artist, Brandi Johnson, was entirely responsible for the look development of Rhonda inside and out: all the exterior paneling, interior leather, fuzz, flocking, carpet, dials, weathering, brass, gadgets, and gizmos, as well as the stitched-up fuzzy clue board and all the other props inside. It was one of those challenges that you both dread and look forward to as an experienced artist, but you know just looking at it that it's going to end up as a real-life toy one day because of how awesome it looks in the end."
—GREG HETTINGER, LOCATION SURFACING SUPERVISOR

Welcome to
Easy Island

THE HUSTLE

"The Hustle is like psychedelic time travel! It's a way of getting you where you're going faster. We're always putting these really fun little sections in the films that are told in a different style and meant to surprise you and make you laugh. This Hustle button is inside Rhonda on the dashboard. When they hit it, it puts them into a psychedelic dimension that, while they're dancing to 'The Hustle,' changes them into different styles. You see the Trolls as bubbles that are bouncing around, and when they switch into another portal, they become baby versions of themselves, and then they come out far in the future."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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1, 2, 4: James Ng • 3, 5–13: Craig Kellman

"When they press the magic Hustle button, they go through space, and everything goes weird. It's a bit like what happened in *Trolls World Tour* with the narwhal and the sushi—it doesn't really add much to the story, but it's a nice break. It's kind of like absurdist sketch comedy when Mr. Dinkles goes to heaven and nearly meets God in *Trolls World Tour*, and then gets smashed back down and was disappointed he didn't go to heaven. Moments like that make *Trolls*, because they have a bunch of weird stuff in them that is just for fun."
—MARTIN COSTELLO, CHARACTER TD SUPERVISOR

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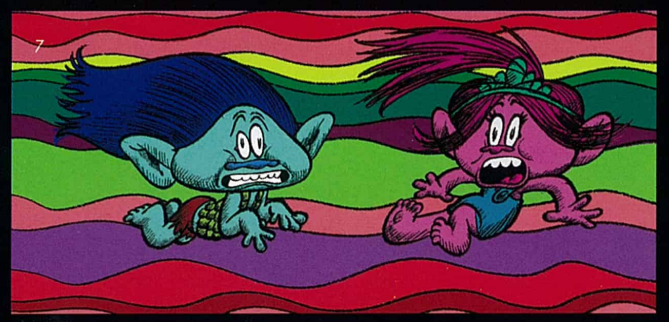

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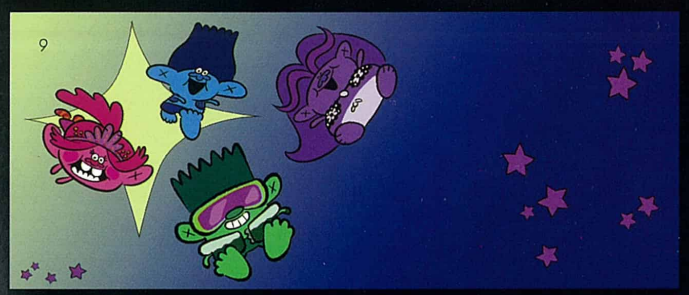

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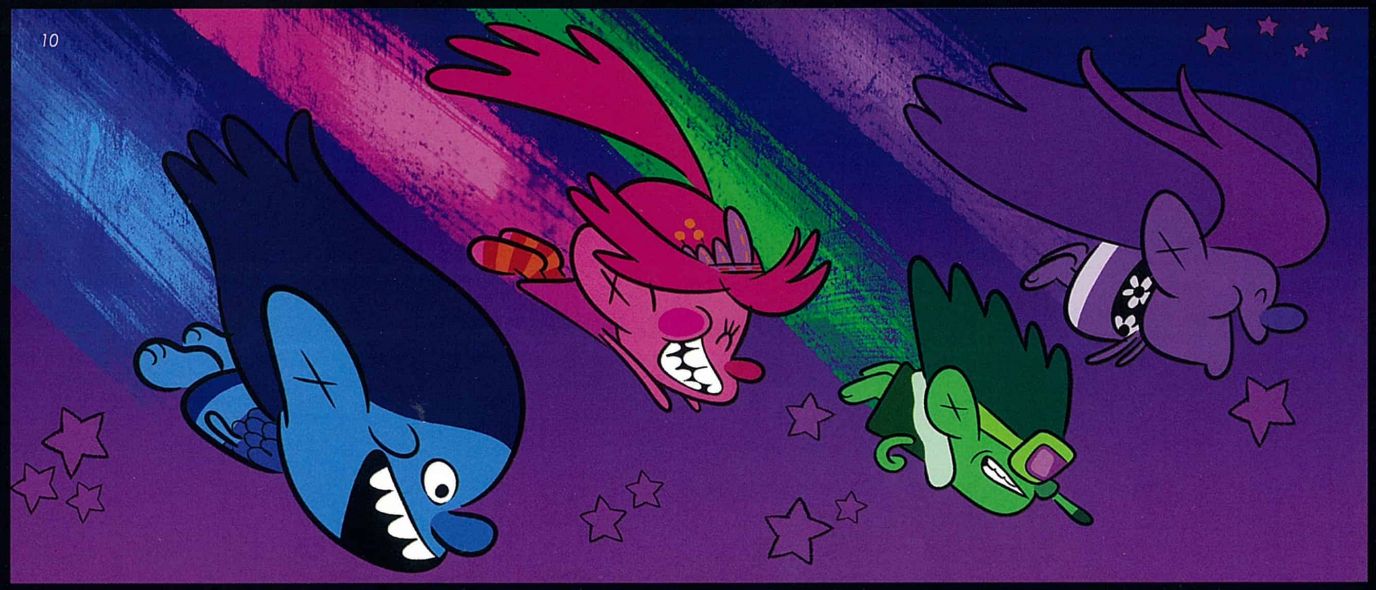

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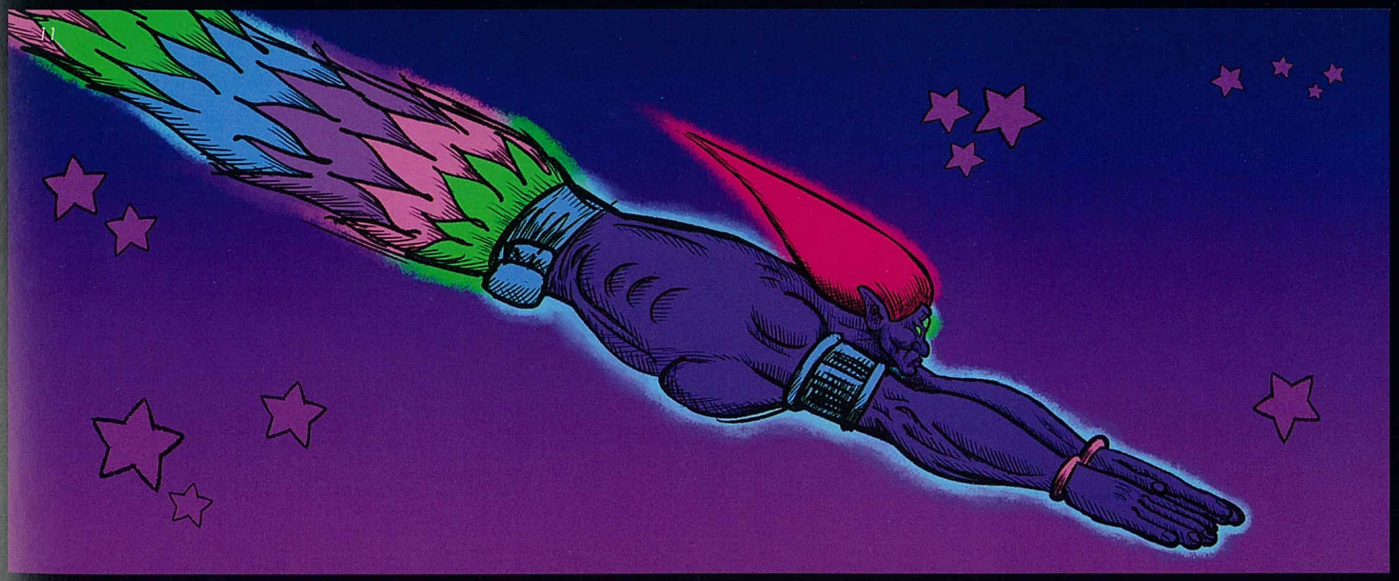

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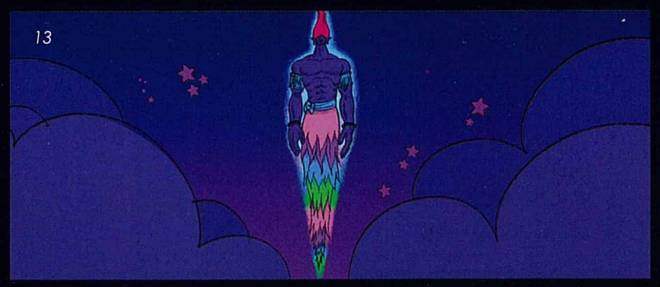
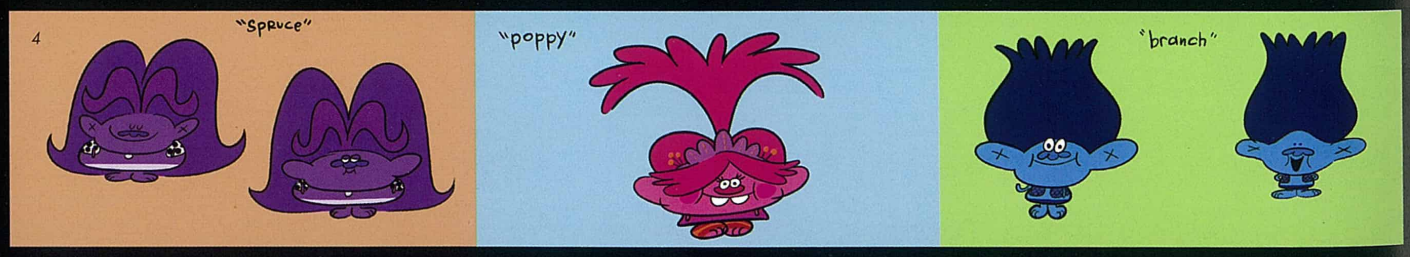


"For the Hustle, the directors knew from the get-go they wanted to work with 2D animation in some form or another. We worked with different great artists to translate the world into their own way, and it became this beautiful mesh of everyone who worked on it: Dave Cooper, Craig Kellman, Stevie Lewis, and Jon Magram. The scene does a couple of things: it takes you out of the movie because it's 2D—you go from this 3D movie, and all of a sudden, everything is a flat cartoon. Second thing: it walks into psychedelia. We go into '60s, '70s art with flowery backgrounds; the characters look completely different; they become these really funny teardrop shapes, and they keep morphing. Walt loves the '60s and '70s, and we just threw everything in that we could think of."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR



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"In our film, our characters find themselves in a race against time, so they need a mechanism to literally hustle. Rhonda has the ability to space-time travel as needed. However, there are certain side effects to other creatures going through this space-time warp, and so we get to follow them through their journey through the Hustle as they hurry along between point A and point B."
—JAMES THORNTON, HEAD OF CHARACTER

1–3: Dave Cooper • 4: Craig Kellman • 5: Jon Magram

HONEYMOON PLANS

"When they're on their motorcycle, we wanted to make sure that there was subtle wind on their hair, wind on their clothes, wind on the fur that King Gristle has on his cape—everything needed to move so that people believe that they are actually traveling. Their journey gets emphasized with the addition of all those tiny additional details in CFX."
—PRADIPTO SENGUPTA,
CFX SUPERVISOR

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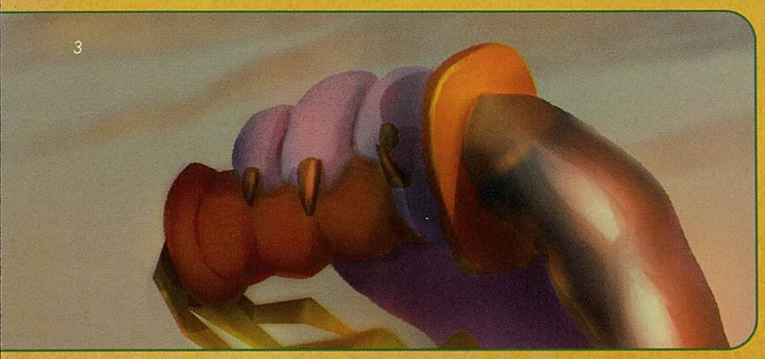

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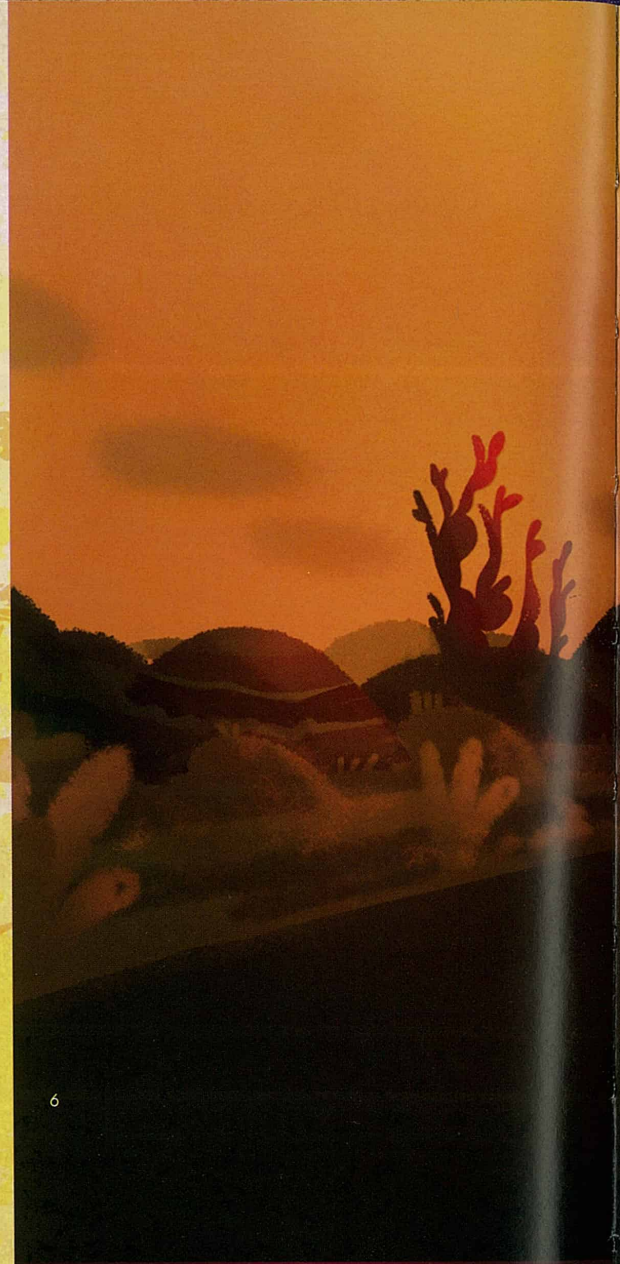

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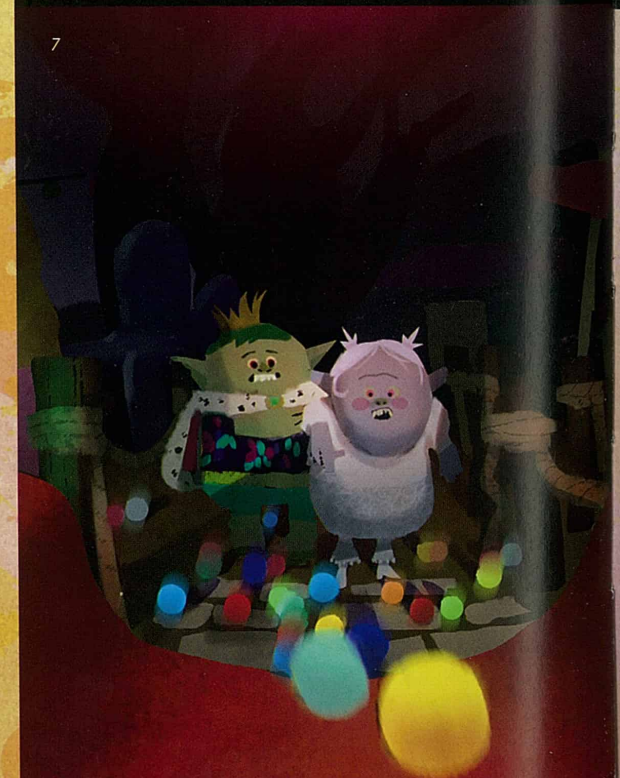

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"I picture them going to the Bergen version of an amusement park in New Jersey—which is closed down now, but was a very dangerous, bacteria-filled water park where you could get multiple injuries . . . these newlyweds still behave like high school kids."
—GINA SHAY, PRODUCER

1, 2: Ryan Gerrish (design) • Yung-Lo Chang (art model) • 3–6: Beatrice Blue • 7, 8: Kenard Pak

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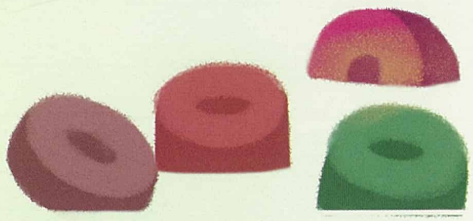
Vacay Island

Operation Perfect Harmony is in full swing when our heroes arrive on Vacay Island, a laid-back, fun-in-the-sun spot that sprouts a pool-noodle jungle and is surrounded by an ocean of polymer water beads. They're looking for Spruce—who goes by Bruce now that he's a responsible business owner, husband, and father. He's married to Vacay Island native Brandy, a tall, terry cloth/water balloon–like creature several times the size of her husband and mom to their thirteen attention-hungry children. Together they run the Bruce and Sons & One Daughter Cantina. Brandy is supportive and urges Bruce to go rescue Floyd—especially since there's a raging case of pink eye among all the kids at home.

Noodle Jungle

"When the Trolls arrive on Vacay Island, the first thing they have to do is make their way through the noodle jungle, which is made up of pool noodles and flotation devices. When the art department pitched us this concept, we were immediately on board. It's so colorful and immersive and unexpected—but somehow just makes so much sense."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR



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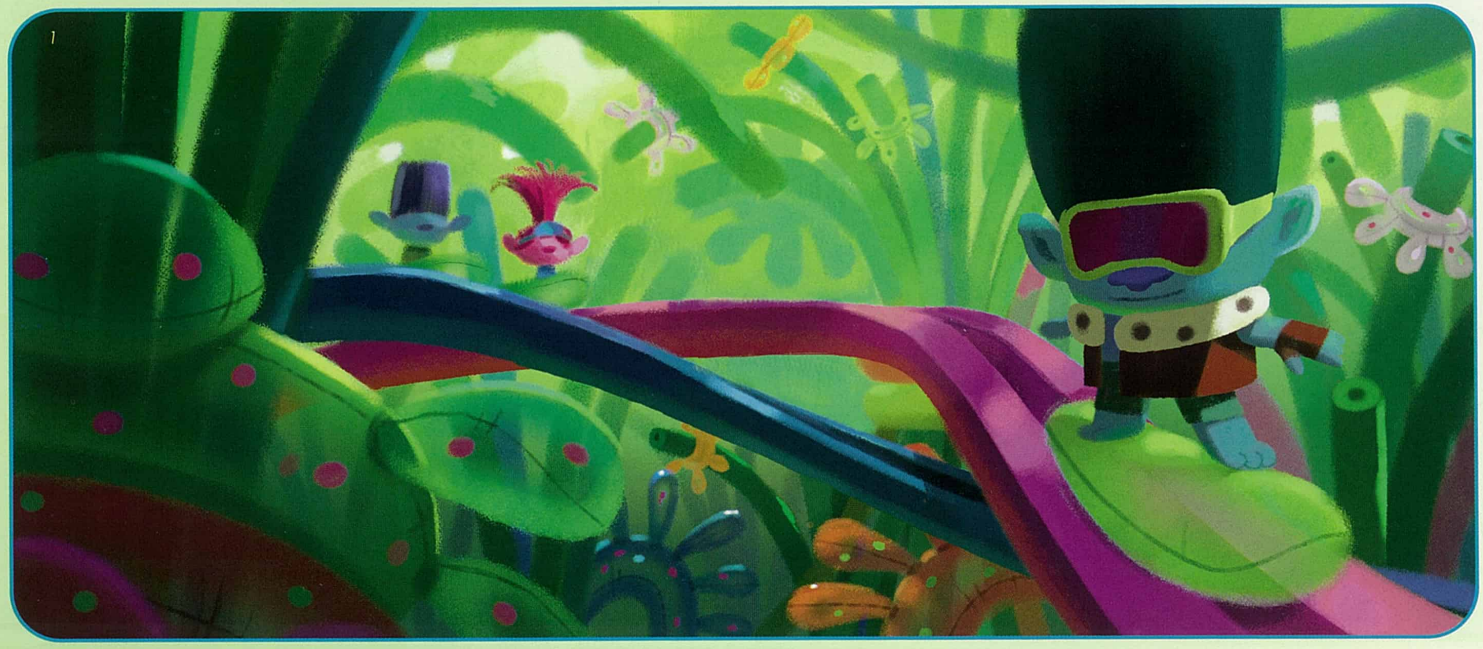
PREVIOUS SPREAD: (LEFT) James Ng; (RIGHT) Stevie Lewis •
THIS SPREAD: Stevie Lewis



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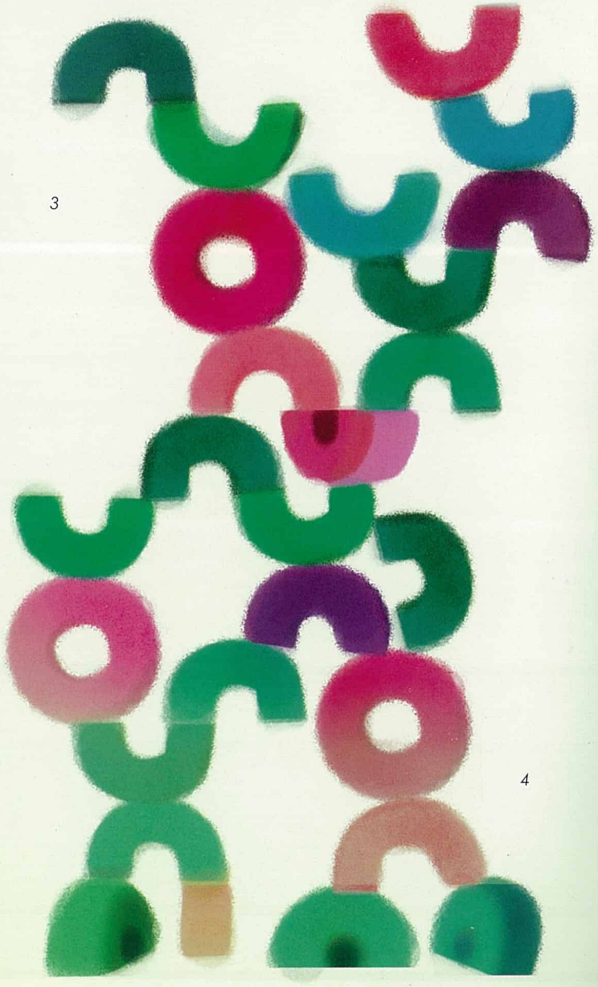

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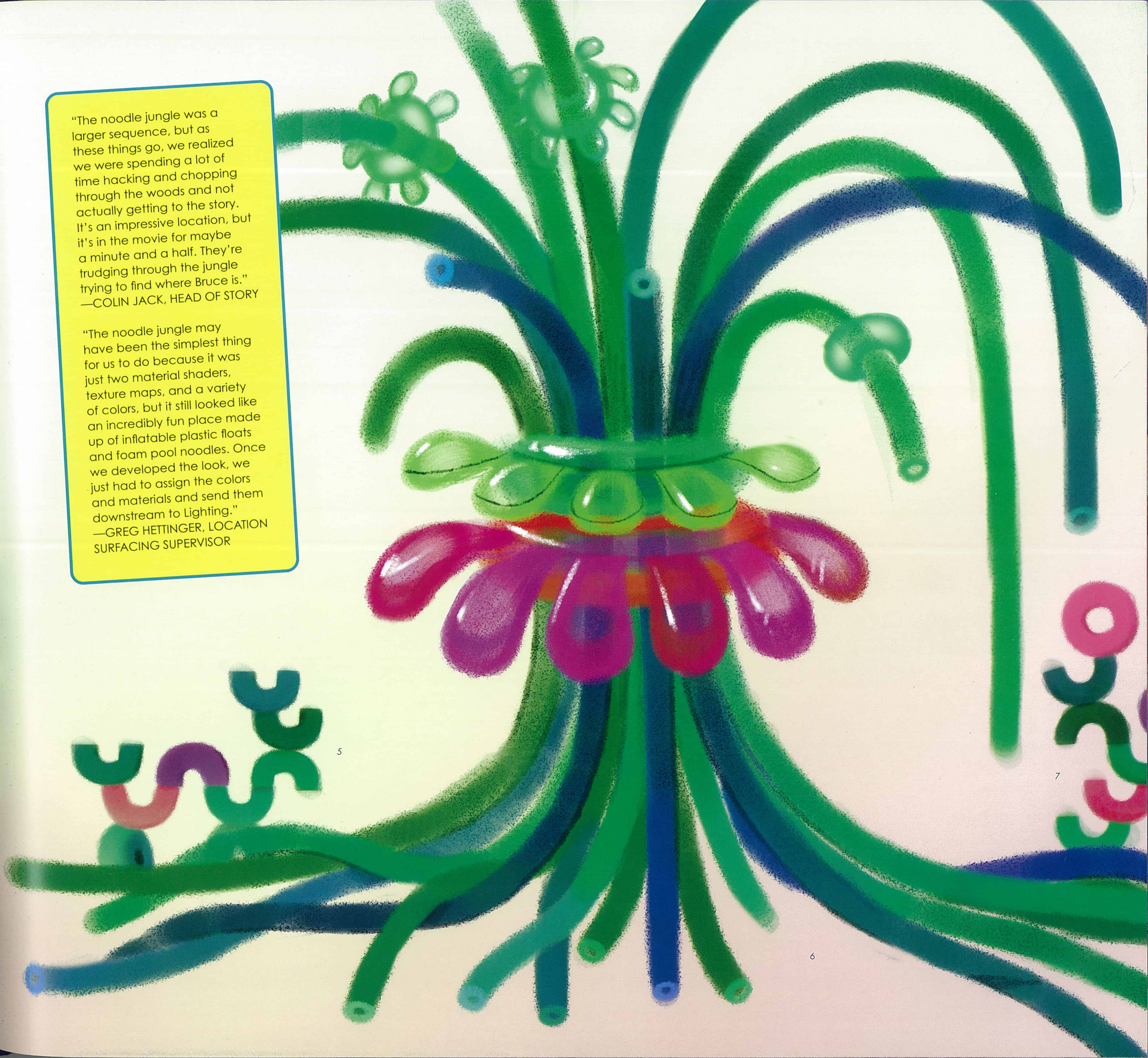
"The noodle jungle was a larger sequence, but as these things go, we realized we were spending a lot of time hacking and chopping through the woods and not actually getting to the story. It's an impressive location, but it's in the movie for maybe a minute and a half. They're trudging through the jungle trying to find where Bruce is."
—COLIN JACK, HEAD OF STORY

"The noodle jungle may have been the simplest thing for us to do because it was just two material shaders, texture maps, and a variety of colors, but it still looked like an incredibly fun place made up of inflatable plastic floats and foam pool noodles. Once we developed the look, we just had to assign the colors and materials and send them downstream to Lighting."
—GREG HETTINGER, LOCATION SURFACING SUPERVISOR



The Island

"Vacay Island is fun. Everything is pool- and beach-related. You have plants that are made out of foam noodles and inflatables. I'm a huge Dave Cooper fan, and he was the inspiration for a lot of this stuff. I was super excited to work with Dave and see his whimsical shapes and his vision for how things are set up and how they look. It's a new location for us and a whole new cast of characters that call back to a tactile vintage hand puppet. They have interesting textures to them that look like terry cloth."
—MATTHEW PAULSON, LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR

"As a CFX supervisor, I'm predominantly responsible for establishing the look of cloth and hair simulation on the movie, so we as a department worked very closely with the head of character animation, the production designer, and the VFX supervisor. For the puppetlike Vacay Islanders, we wanted to generate some really nice, realistic behavior, specifically around the neck region when they talk. They have these huge bellies, so we wanted to add some jiggle on top of them—to make them move nicely and add to their overall characteristics."
—PRADIPTO SENGUPTA, CFX SUPERVISOR

"The polymer water beads are essentially transparent, refractive, and reflective. The water, including a wave that Bruce surfs, is made up of these things, and we had to get the effect of the setting sun shining through the backside of the wave. That's something we've done before, but we've never done it before in terms of the wave being a bunch of separate water beads. They're all double-sided, so it's exponentially harder to get the light to accurately bend and bounce. How light got through those things was a real push on our rendering abilities and the way we composited—we had to push the light through and, in some cases, boost it and do all sorts of things we've never really had to do before."
—GABRIEL PORTNOF, HEAD OF LIGHTING

THIS SPREAD: *Stevie Lewis*

THIS SPREAD: Dave Cooper

"An effect we've developed for the film that I'm really excited about is this representation of water. In *Trolls World Tour*, we made the rivers out of organza and silk. It had a very materialistic, iridescent feel to it, and we did a lot of practical shoots to figure out what it looked like if a boat was moving on top of the silk: is it just pushing the fabric, or is it creating ripples? The water we did in the Vacay Island area is made out of polymer water beads. You submerge them in water; when they hydrate, they turn into little gel beads—kids play with them in the bathtub. They make a heck of a mess. We had a practical shoot where we had four huge buckets full of these things, and we just played with them in the studio parking lot. It was fun!"
—STEPHEN WOOD, HEAD OF EFFECTS

THIS SPREAD: Dave Cooper • OVERLEAF: Priscilla Wong

Spruce

"Spruce/Bruce—who was voiced by the super-expressive Daveed Diggs—has so much hair! He might have some of the most hair that we've created on a Troll. This one was created by Jacob Zimmer in CFX and Carson McKay in Surfacing. Jacob did an amazing job trying to deal with all that hair and the way that it flows and swoops down—making sure that if it touches the ground, it feels natural, but while also trying to keep it up so that he can still walk and move around inside Rhonda without taking out a bunch of other characters. It was also challenging to get the right amount of detail in the hair. You don't want it to be overly detailed where it detracts from his face, eyes, and performance, but you also need enough detail so that if you do see it up close, it doesn't just look like a wall of flat hair. We really worked on getting the right striations, the gradient of the hair, and certain breakups that helped it feel natural but still read as a large, cohesive tuft."
—ANDY HARBECK, CHARACTER SURFACING SUPERVISOR

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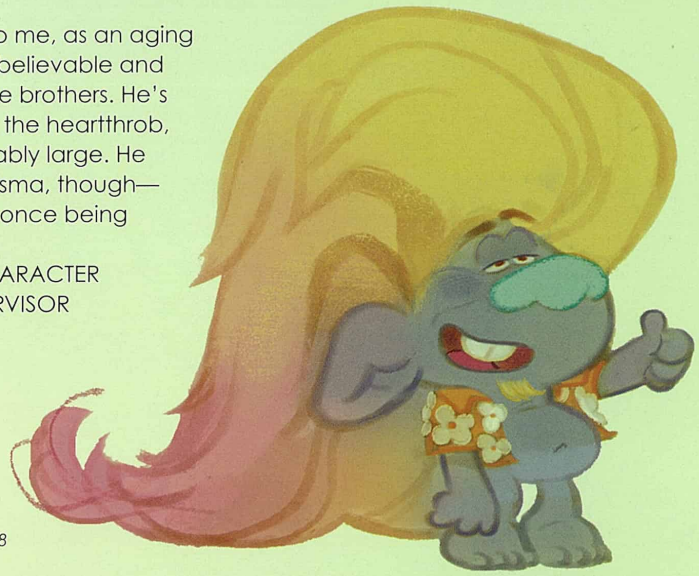
"Spruce/Bruce very easily could have become a laid-back surfer caricature, but we wanted to dig a little deeper than that. We ended up finding a really fun version of this guy who lives on a beach with his wife and kids: he loves being a dad, and he owns a restaurant. I like that contrast. He's of course willing to help his brothers when one of them is in trouble."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

"Spruce/Bruce, to me, as an aging man, is the most believable and relatable of all the brothers. He's this guy who was the heartthrob, but now he's lovably large. He still has that charisma, though—that comes from once being the hot shot."
—JEFF HAYES, CHARACTER MODELING SUPERVISOR



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1, 2, 4–8: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 3: Character render

Brandy

"Brandy, who is voiced by Patti Harrison, takes care of things. She's a wife and a mother, and she's in charge of a restaurant. She can't be as slow or as laid-back as a typical Vacay Islander, but we never wanted her to feel frantic or that things were out of control. It was important for us to make her feel like she wasn't impervious to all the kids she had to take care of, but we wanted her to also feel very capable, responsible, and loving."
—BENJAMIN WILLIS, HEAD OF CHARACTER ANIMATION

"A recurring challenge is the scale relationship between characters. In storyboard it's easy to slightly skew the scale of characters for clarity's sake, but when we switch to the 3D world, we are fairly limited with the scale range of characters. We often have to find creative solutions to maintain the clarity of the characters' interaction while keeping them at true scale. By being creative with staging, we can find solutions to help characters interact with each other despite their size difference."
—THEOPHILE BONDOUX, HEAD OF LAYOUT

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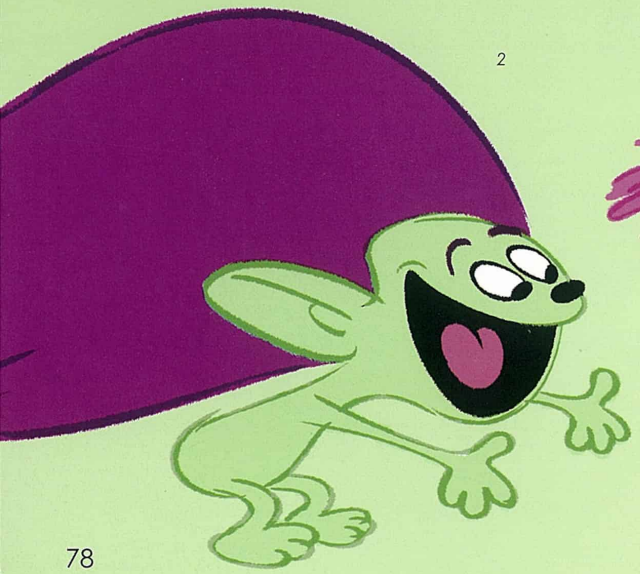

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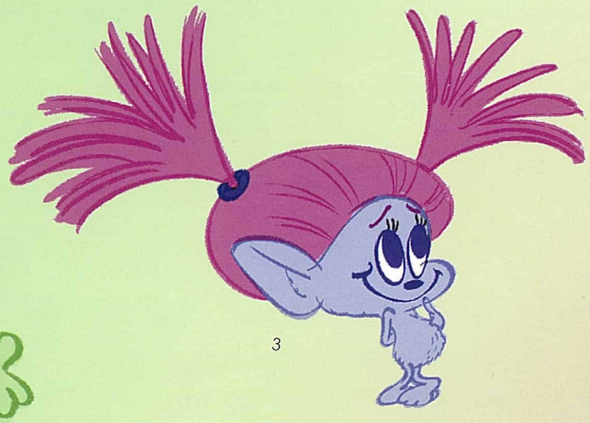

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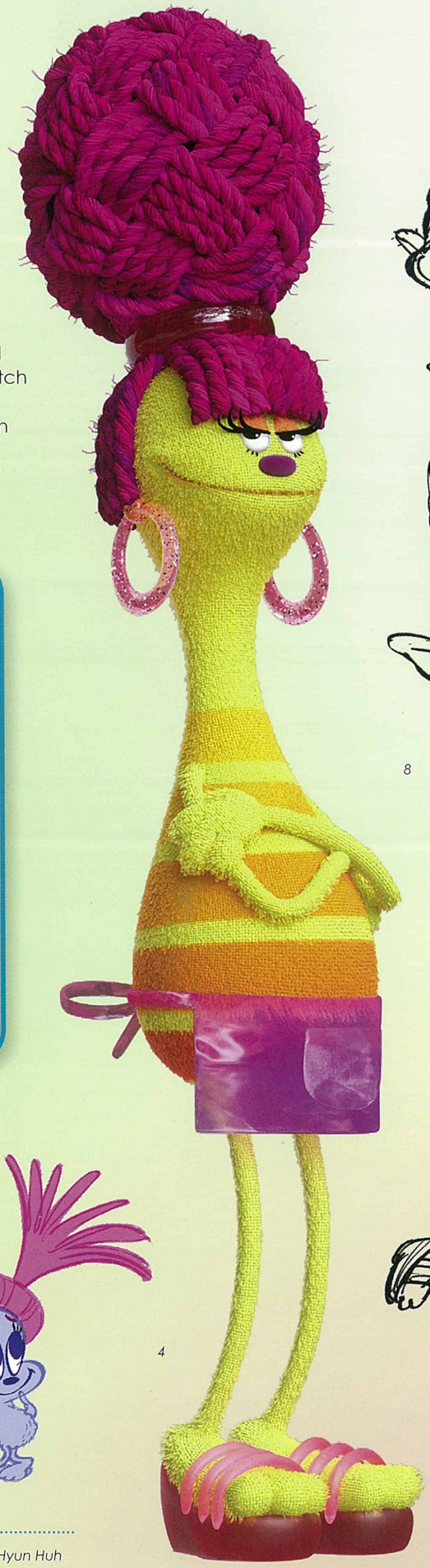

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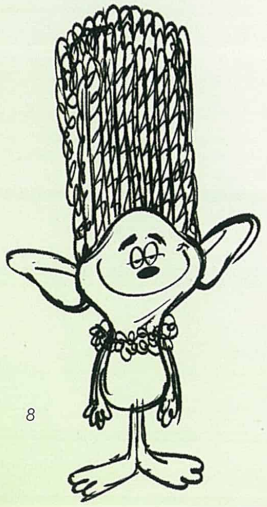

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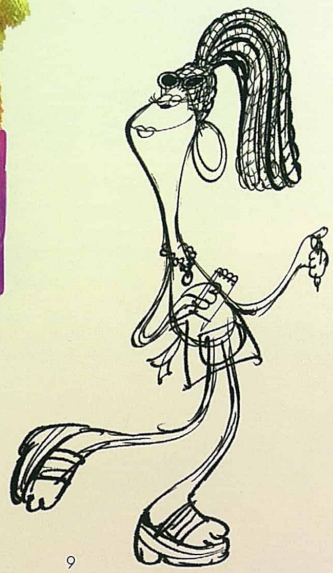

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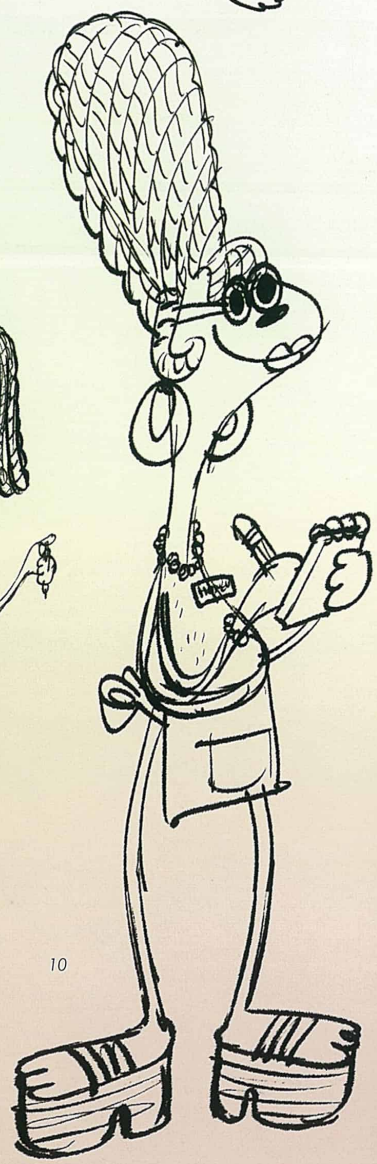

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1: Craig Kellman (character design); Hyun Huh (art model) • 2–21: Craig Kellman

"Having one kid is a lot—can you imagine thirteen? But Brandy and Bruce are superheroes as they balance running a restaurant and expertly parenting thirteen kids—all with pink eye, too! That was fun when my kids were young."
—GINA SHAY, PRODUCER

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Spruce and Sons & One Daughter Cantina

"The cantina is a large open bar/lazy river/giant hot tub area where people are lounging around. It's not a very big place, but it's enough that we could make it feel like a cozy jazz club/swim bar. We have a kelp chandelier in there. You know those drip castles that kids make at the beach? That's what the walls look like. They're starting to have stalactites coming down."
—MATTHEW PAULSON, LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR

1, 6: Stevie Lewis • 2, 3: James Ng • 4: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 5: Dave Cooper

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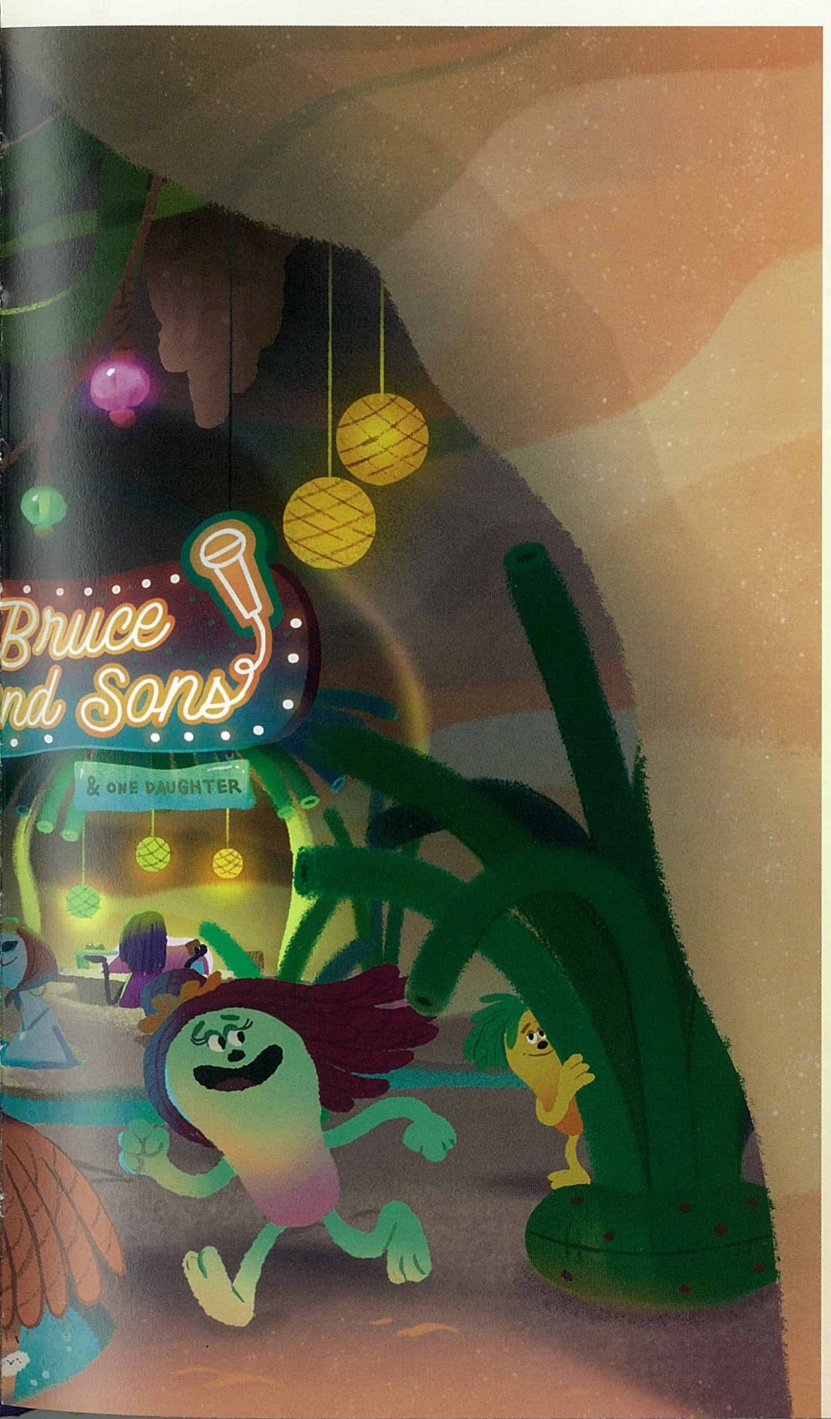

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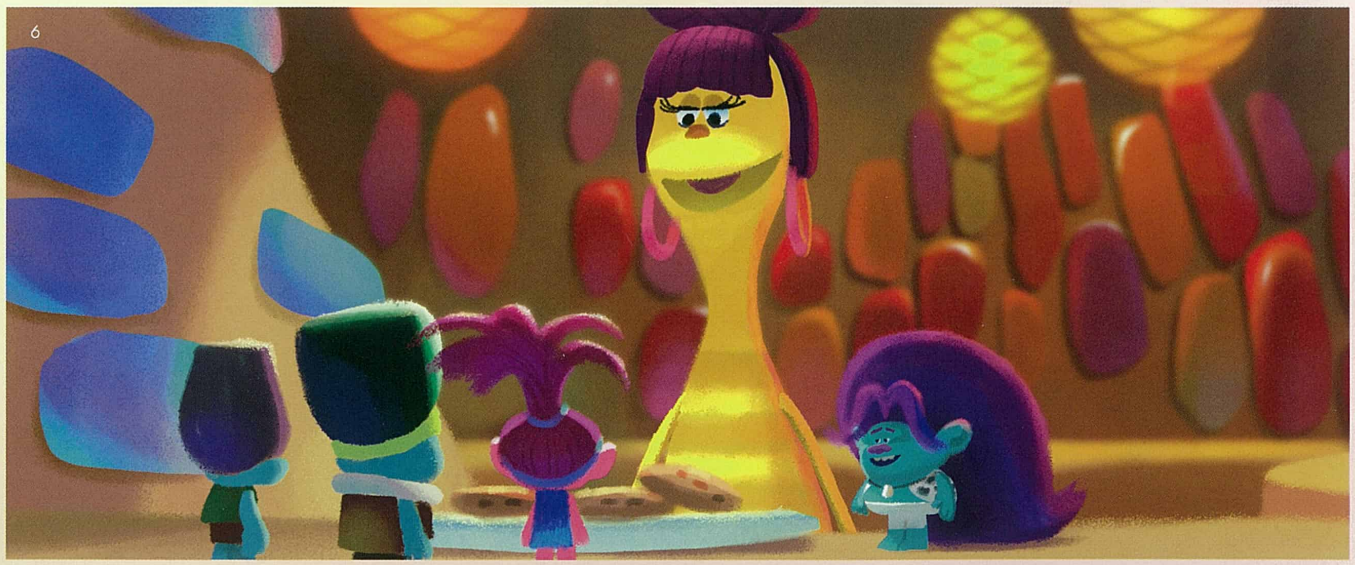

Vacay Island Characters

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"Characters in the Trolls world usually give off stuffed-animal vibes. These characters are different. They're a little bit bigger, and we treated their bodies much more like water balloons, which was new to us. It also adds to the idea of how fluidly they move—their pace and their rhythm. There's a flow to their movements, where one thing leads to another seamlessly."
—BENJAMIN WILLIS, HEAD OF CHARACTER ANIMATION

"The most unique surfacing is on the Vacay Islanders. They're a bunch of shaggy, fuzzy, puppet creatures made of simple shapes, really fun colors, and a towel-like material, all surfaced by a very talented artist, Carson McKay. It's one of the best-looking sequences we've done overall, thanks to the combined efforts of many departments and surfaced by my lead artist, Jeff Nichols."
—GREG HETTINGER, LOCATION SURFACING SUPERVISOR

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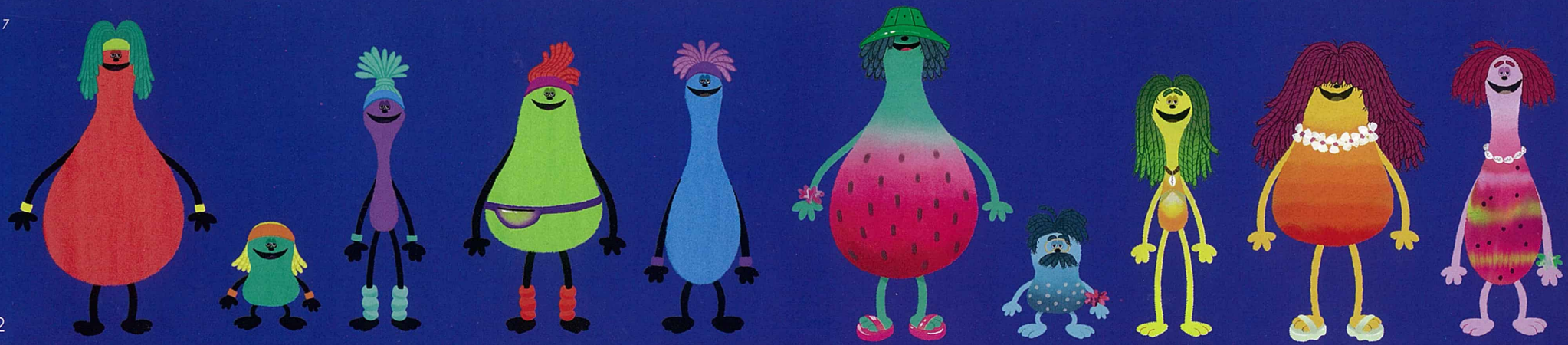

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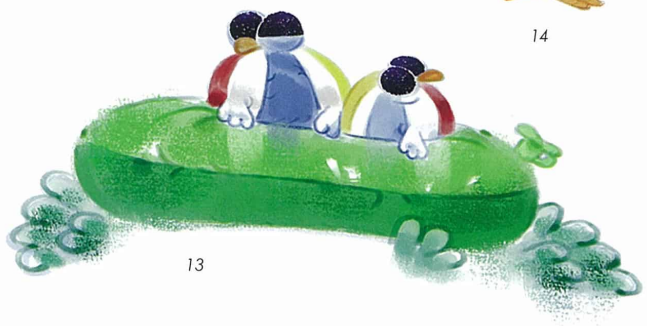

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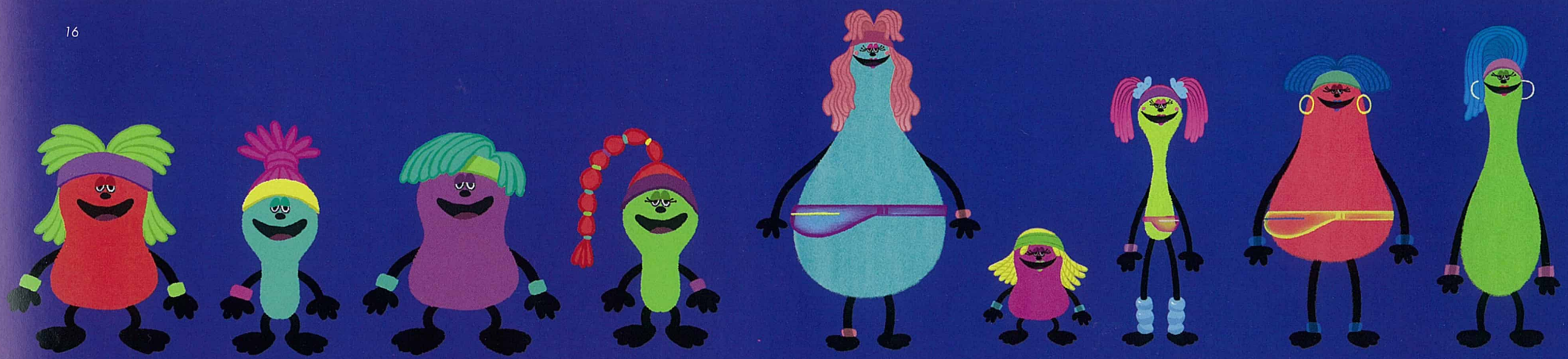
1–6, 8–15: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 7, 16: Craig Kellman & Stevie Lewis • OVERLEAF: *Dave Cooper*

"Our beach ball seagull character was one of the easier characters for us to work on. He's very interesting; he's basically a plastic beach ball but with a little bit of seagull thrown in—eyes and a beak. Once you see him, you won't forget him."
—ANDY HARBECK, CHARACTER SURFACING SUPERVISOR



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Boom Shells

Boom Shells
BOOM

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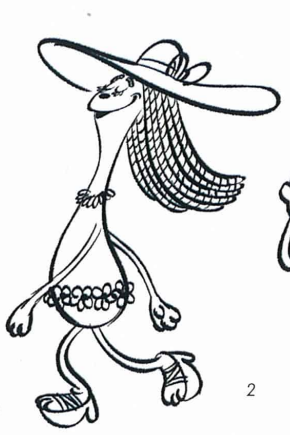

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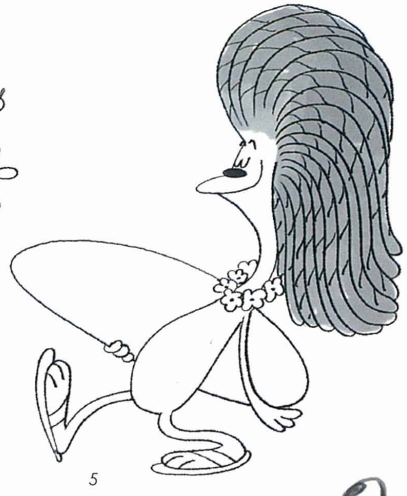

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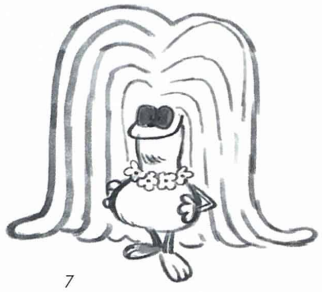

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1, 3–10, 13, 15, 19–21, 25–27: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 2, 12, 14, 16–18, 22–24, 28: Craig Kellman • 11, 29: Craig Kellman & Stevie Lewis • OVERLEAF: Stevie Lewis

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Who am I?

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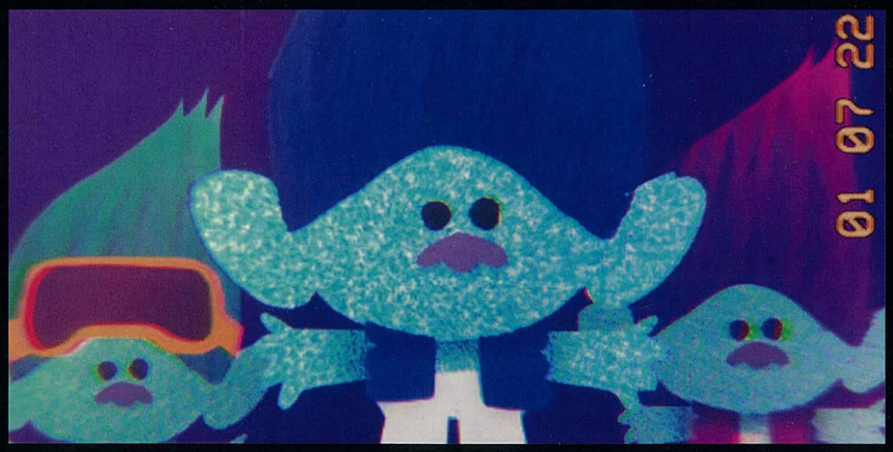
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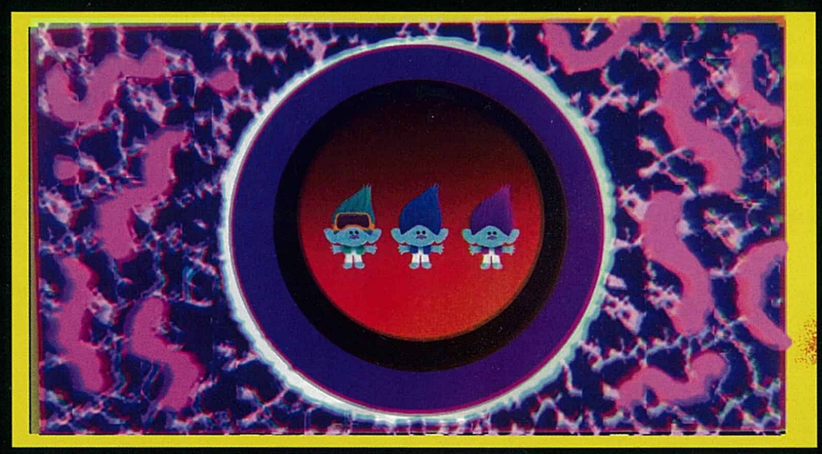

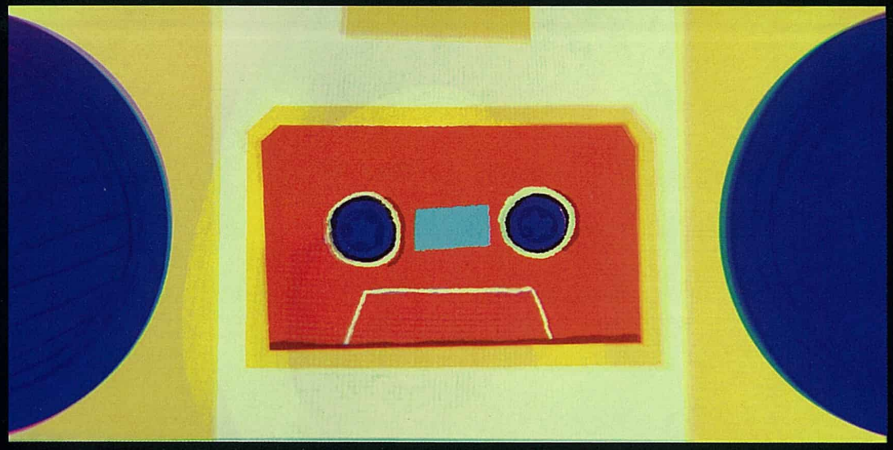
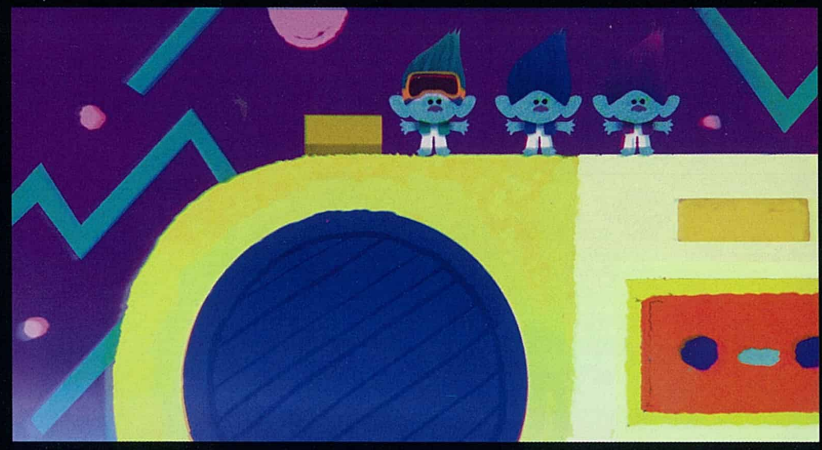
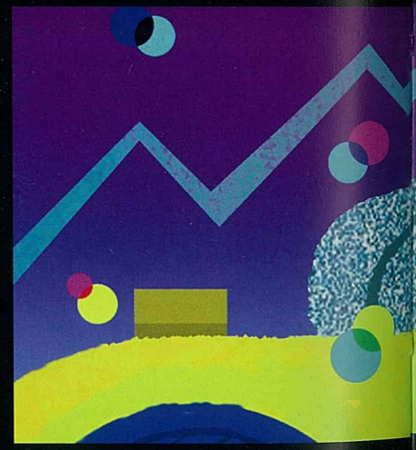
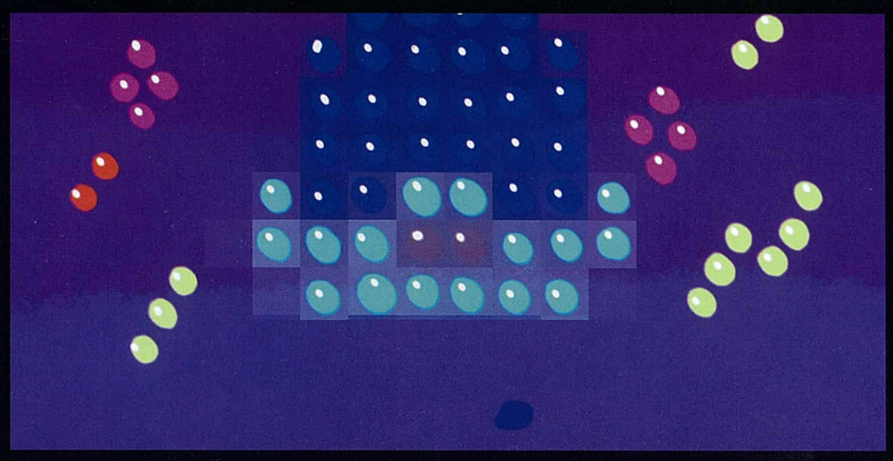
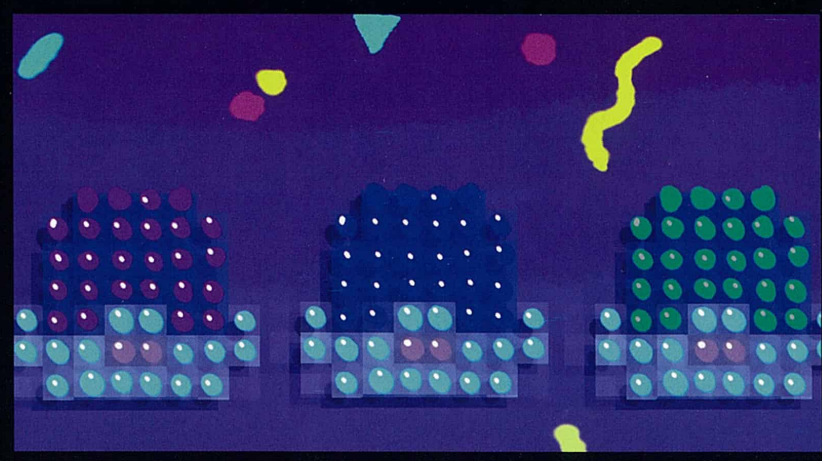
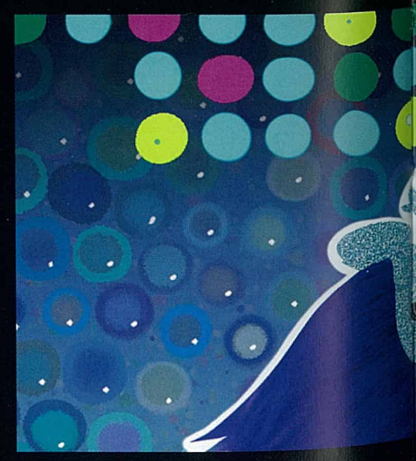

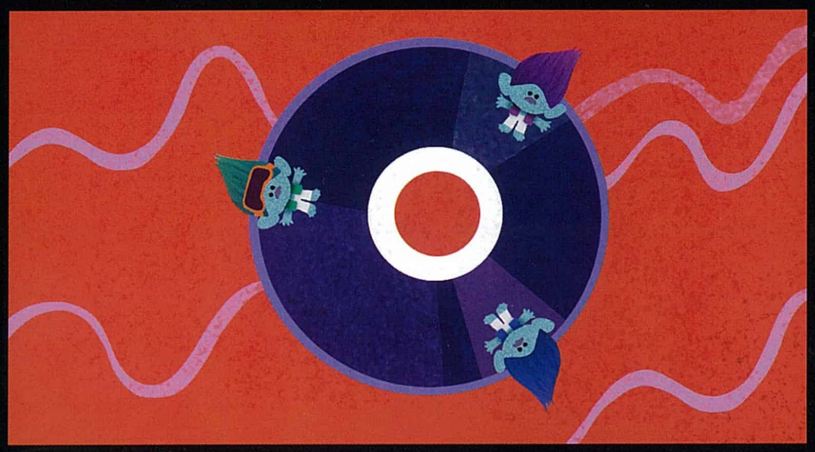

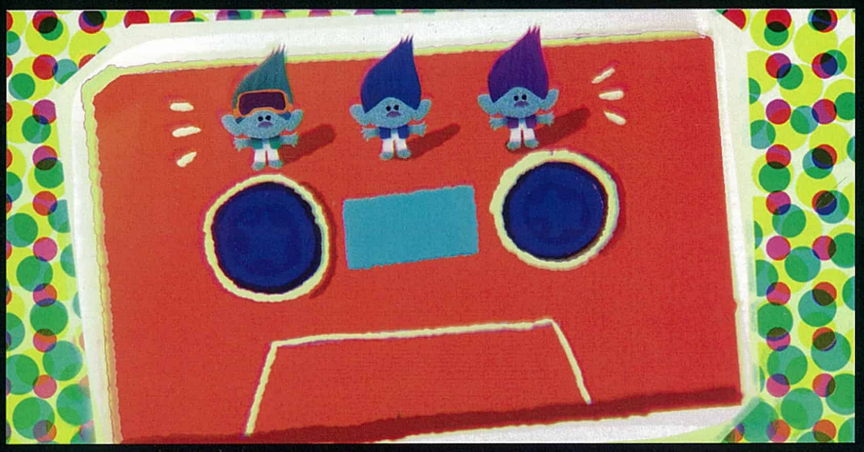

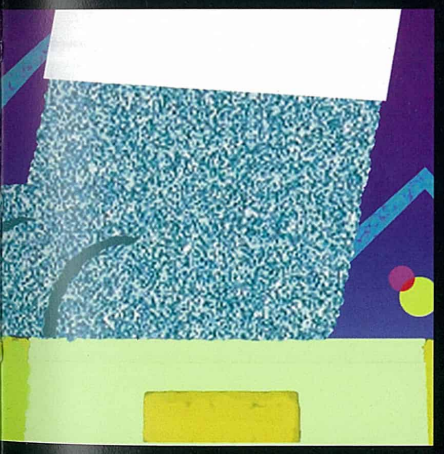

SODA
SNACKS

SHADOW & LIGHT

With Bruce in tow, the next leg of the mission brings the Trolls to the abandoned and somewhat spooky Hole N' Fun mini golf course in search of Clay. Among other erstwhile attractions, this place is home to an old windmill, a kitschy dinosaur, an oversized ice-cream cone, and a menacing talking clown head that tries to deter John Dory, Branch, Bruce, Poppy, Tiny Diamond, and Rhonda from entering. But things are not always what they seem. When the "clown" discovers that they're Trolls, the lights come up, and they're warmly welcomed by another: the "voice" of the clown, the effervescent Viva, who has turned the mini golf course into a Trolls utopia. She led a group of Trolls here years ago when they escaped the great Bergen attack. Unaware that the Bergens are no longer a threat, Viva, with Clay as her right-hand man, lead the armed putt-putt Trolls, who are ready to take out any intruders—as the honeymooning Bridget and King Gristle come to find out.

HOLE N' FUN MINI GOLF

"I like the mini golf Trolls environment and the scene that takes place there, when Branch and Poppy and the brothers show up for the first time, and they're walking through and find themselves in front of a clown that lights up and talks. It's a funny scene. It's very 'who's behind the curtain' because you don't know what is on the other side of that clown. It's just this funny conversation, and then Viva pops out—it's a great reveal."
—JOHN SWANSON, CO-PRODUCER

PREVIOUS SPREAD: (LEFT) *Dave Cooper;* (RIGHT) *Ryan Gerrish* • *1, 7: Ryan Carlson* • *2, 3: Kenard Pak* • *4–6, 8, 9: James Ng*

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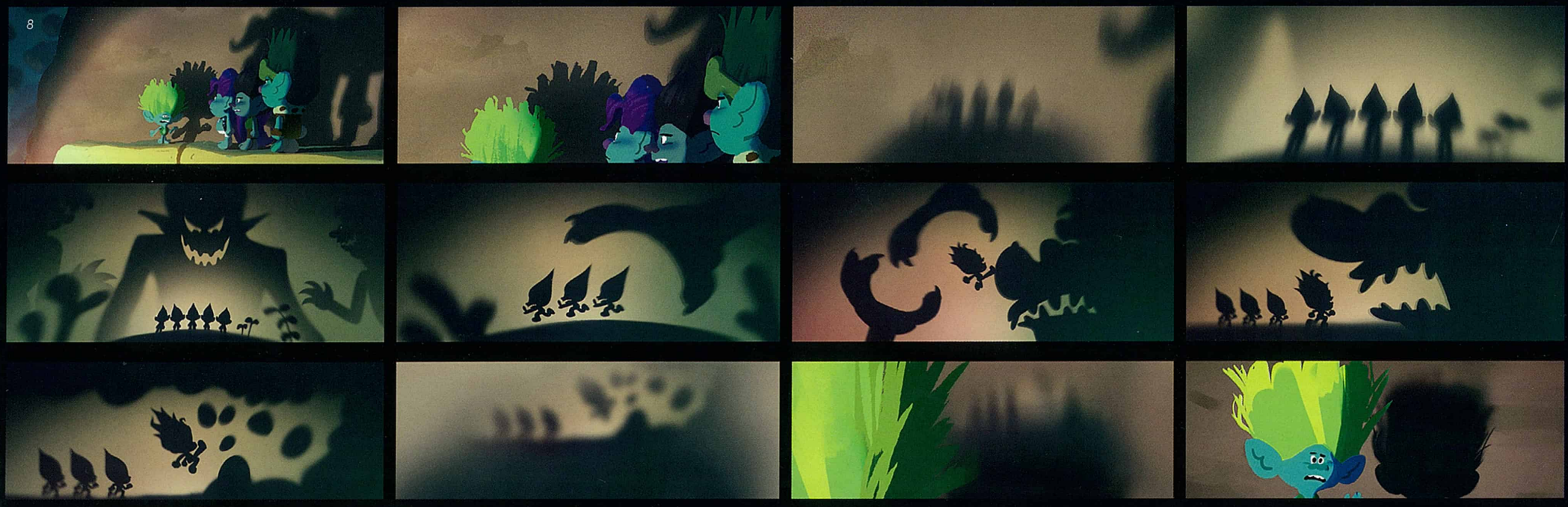

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"I always imagine the mini golf location to be something from a zombie movie where they come across a group of survivors; they're traumatized, but they somehow made this community despite the horrors of whatever was happening outside their walls. This compound felt cultish at one point, so we made a lot of effort to get away from that. When you get there, it's really scary; it's misty, and there's lots of lights. That was the first goal: make it scary but then quickly show off what it really is, which is this place of fun and joy and birthday parties and pizza. Then, of course, you throw in the Bergens with their Bergen shapes and the fact that there are Trolls there . . . Ryan Gerrish, who we call our Bergen King, designed everything. A lot of the Dave Cooper influence made it into this location, so a lot of the eyes look like they're from an old cartoon—there's a lot of wobbly arms, and then, of course, the Bergen touch: Everything looks like a slab of bacon."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR

1: Philip Vose • 2–10: Ryan Gerrish • FOLLOWING SPREAD: (LEFT) Danny Langston; (RIGHT) Alice Herring

"It's a zone in which they have given into their feral instincts, which is protective. It's a cool little set piece. The modelers here at DreamWorks are phenomenal. This is not hyperbole on my part; they are the best. They execute great models that are lush, full of detail, interesting, and even in mesh, they look like fabric, which is pretty awesome. It's cool, the first time, just as a craftsman, when you open up one of these models, and you're looking around the space, and then you drop the camera down, you're looking, and you're just like, 'Wow.' I still love that. That's never gotten old. There are things, day after day, that you really enjoy and become first-time experiences all over again."
—JAMES PETERSON,
FINAL LAYOUT SUPERVISOR

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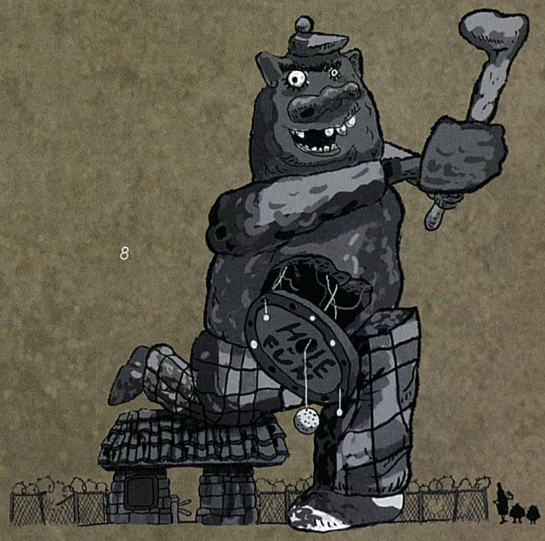

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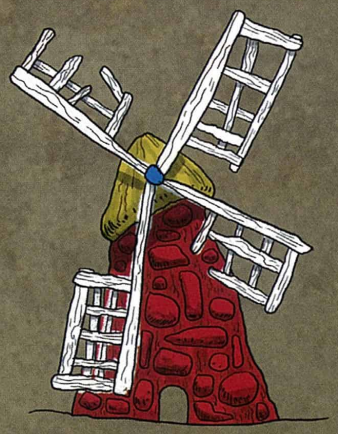

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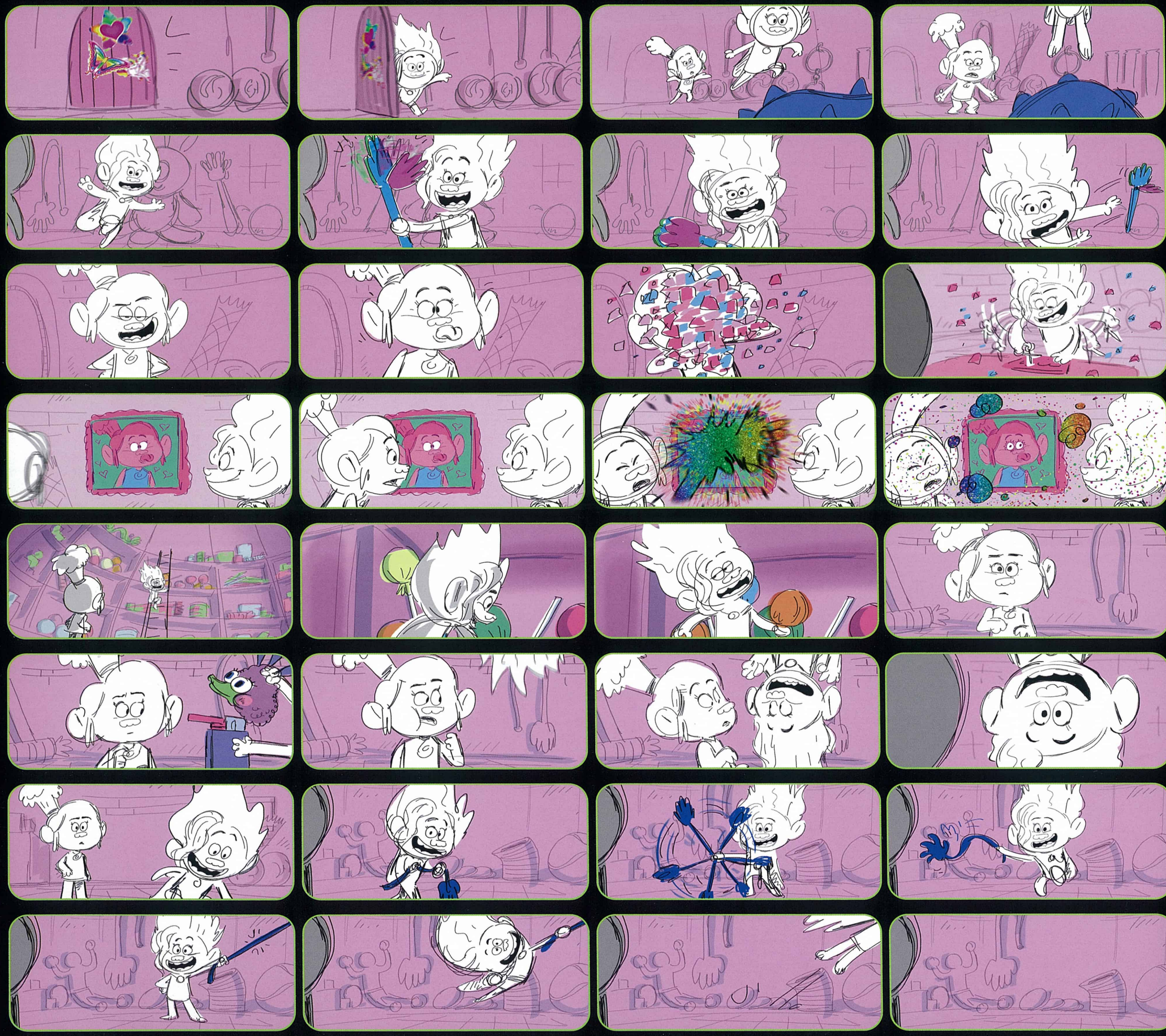

POPPY'S
SCRAPBOOK

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1–3: Dave Cooper • 4: Ruben Perez

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VIVA

"It's the smell of french fries in the air that hauls Bridget and King Gristle into the mini golf course, and they start exploring. They've never seen this place before, and there are these little creatures that are lurking in the dark, and they don't really know what's happening; and then they get tied up. It's another great place for some comedic relief in the tense moment of them being tied up and not knowing what's going on. Right at the last minute, Viva realizes who they are, because Poppy has talked about her best friend before. There's a scrapbook (there always has to be a scrapbook!) that has Bridget in it; Viva thinks that maybe this is them, and then has to ask that question of them. When she does, she realizes that she doesn't need to tie them up; she doesn't need to be afraid of them because Poppy was right—they're not out to get anybody. It's a pivotal moment for Viva to grow and change and trust in something her sister said—who she really just met—and in these Bergens, who she's always been told are the ones they need to fear."
—CASSANDRA FANNING, HEAD OF LOCATIONS

"We shared the grooming of Viva's hair with the CFX department, and one of the artists, Kelly Shay, surfaced Viva's hair and groomed it. The challenge was trying to get the clumping and the shaping from all the different angles, because her hair looks much crazier than Poppy's, but we didn't want it to be so crazy that she looked too wild. It was a fine line—trying to make it feel like Poppy's hair but at the same time be unique so that she stands apart. The way her hair comes out at different angles, the challenge was trying to do that in 3D—it's easy to make it look right from one angle, from the front, but what happens when you see her from a three-quarters view, or from the side, or from behind? How do you get all those pieces to work together from as many different angles as you can?"
—ANDY HARBECK, CHARACTER SURFACING SUPERVISOR

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1–4, 6–17: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 5: Character render • 18: Priscilla Wong

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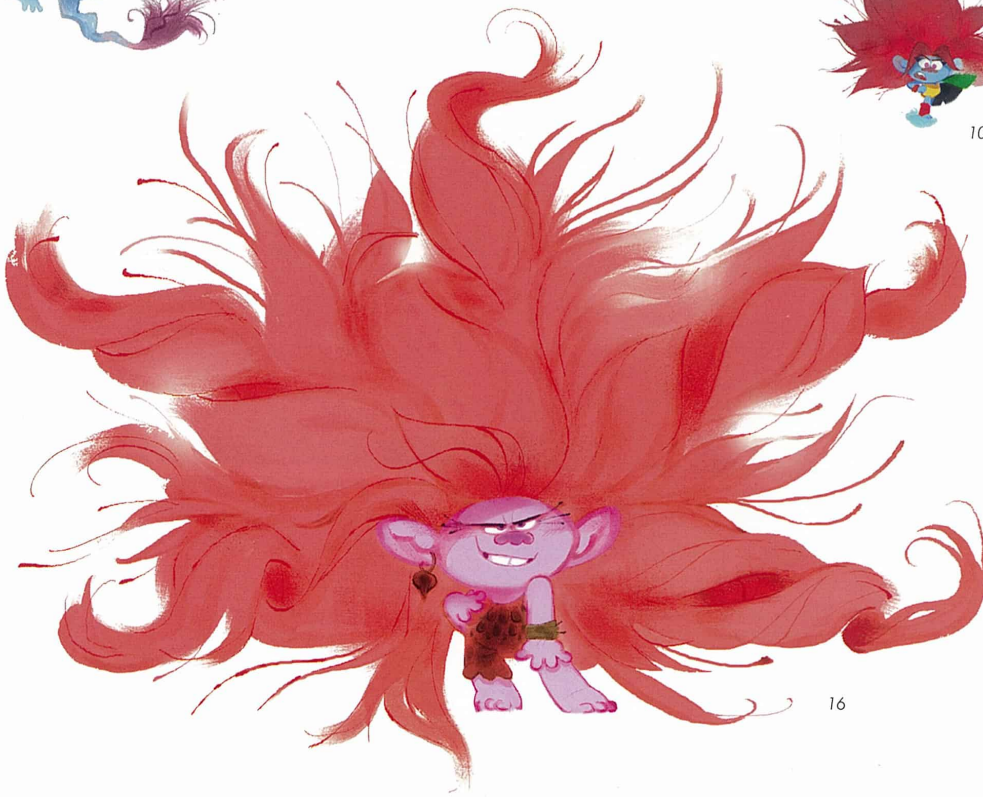

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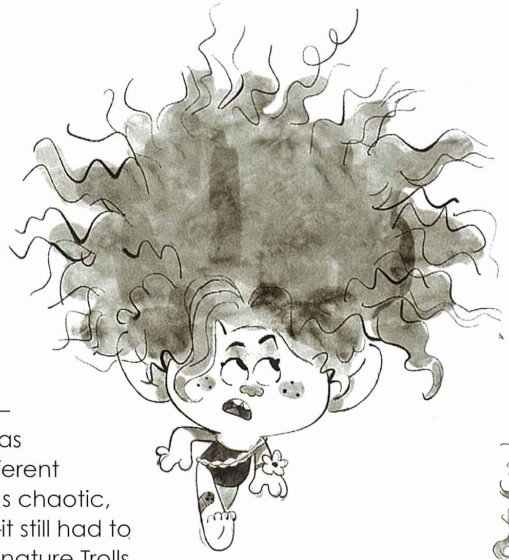
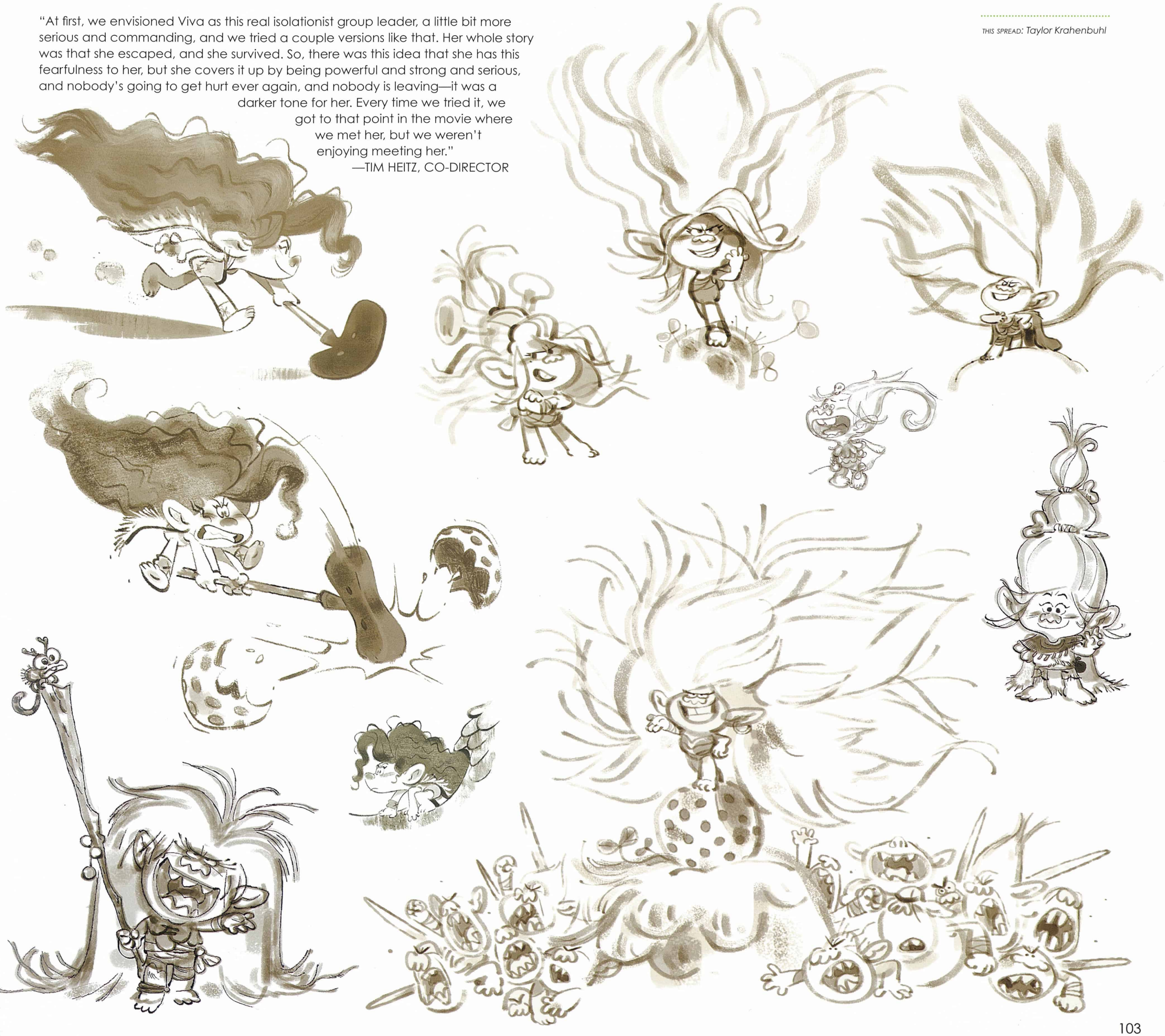
"When I was making the showpiece model for her—the maquette—the hair was complex. It has a lot of different curls of different rhythm. It's chaotic, but there's an order to it—it still had to resolve into this roughly signature Trolls hair shape. It took me a while. On top of that, there were a lot of textures and materials and embellishments to work out in her costume; her makeup was elaborate, too. I found myself having to do a lot more than I did on some other characters, and that was, for me, rewarding and challenging."
—JEFF HAYES, CHARACTER MODELING SUPERVISOR



"At first, we envisioned Viva as this real isolationist group leader, a little bit more serious and commanding, and we tried a couple versions like that. Her whole story was that she escaped, and she survived. So, there was this idea that she has this fearfulness to her, but she covers it up by being powerful and strong and serious, and nobody's going to get hurt ever again, and nobody is leaving—it was a darker tone for her. Every time we tried it, we got to that point in the movie where we met her, but we weren't enjoying meeting her."

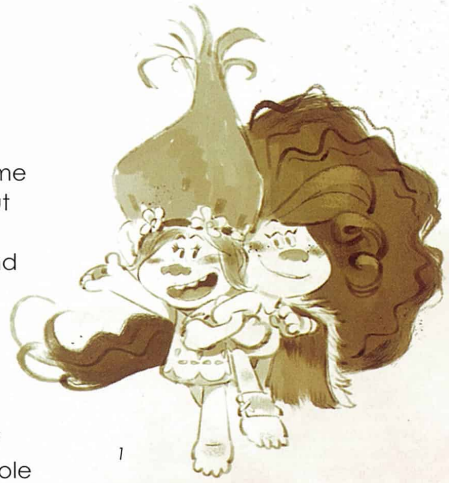
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

THIS SPREAD: Taylor Krahenbuhl



SISTERS!

"Viva and Poppy meeting for the first time is such a sugar rush for both of them, but especially for Poppy. It's just very funny when Viva surprisingly braids her hair and talks a hundred miles an hour. She's finally met her equal. It's heartwarming to see them connect and then sad to see them have to part ways so soon. I'm a fan of stories that make you feel something for these made-up flashes of light on screen. I'm also a fan of this whole scene because everyone on my team had a part in making it happen."
—GREG HETTINGER, LOCATION SURFACING SUPERVISOR



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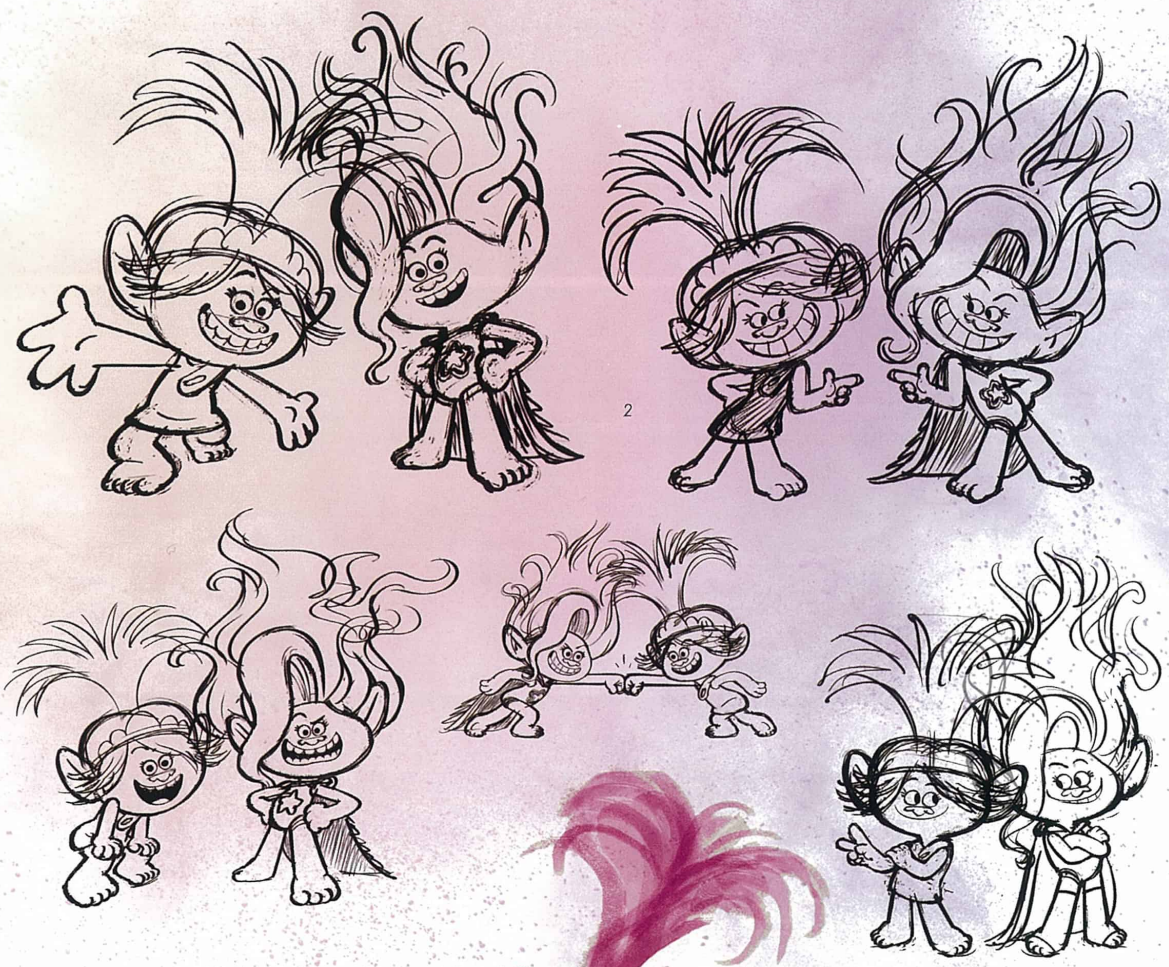

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"I love the scene where Poppy meets Viva for the first time. This was actually a scene that the filmmakers went through several different iterations of and tried several different approaches to Viva's character. The moment they landed on the version that was 'more Poppy than Poppy,' you could feel that they'd landed on something great. I love the audience reaction you get when Poppy says, 'Is this what people feel like when they first meet me?'"
—KRISTIN LOWE, CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

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"When Poppy and Viva break up, we wanted to show, through lighting and color, how Viva is stuck in the past, and Poppy's the one who's trying to pull her out. The lighting inside this mini golf course, which has a big gate around it, is still predawn, and you really don't get the sun coming in until this gate opens. We made it a point to show how Viva won't step outside that gate; she won't step into the light; she won't move on from her past experiences."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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1, 3, 4, 6: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 2: Craig Kellman • 5: Young-Ji Cha • 7: Character render

"Discovering long-lost siblings happened to me in reality, and I drew on that experience for this reunion between sisters. My surprise brother and I had many similar physical attributes, but the similarities went so much deeper. The first time we met, we talked all night and realized we share a common creative-leader type personality; he's a chef in Italy. We even had the same signature and bonded over our love of cheese—he actually makes pecorino, lucky me! But, of course, many of these long-lost sibling reunions exist because of some dark story from the past, and we have to reconstruct that history from the fractured information we know together."
—GINA SHAY, PRODUCER

"When Poppy finds out she has a sister, she almost explodes with joy. Viva's effervescent attitude is delivered perfectly by the talented Camila Cabello."
—WALT DOHRN, DIRECTOR

VIVA'S ICE-CREAM CONE

"When Poppy arrives, Viva shows her how great it is there, and so we needed a set that wasn't overgrown, old, or scary—it had to be an inviting place where Poppy might want to stay. Viva chooses this ice-cream cone. The outside was inspired by Route 66 sculptures, but on the inside it's very much a Trolls Village–style interior, and it's similar to Poppy's pod—it's very pleasant and bright, and it's got all these fun props in there. She's made a clubhouse out of things from the prize box at the mini golf course: she's got a coffee table that's made out of yo-yos, she's got soft couches made out of marshmallows, and she's got a bunk bed that's the inside of a roller skate. It looks like an awesome teen's bedroom with a lot of stuff on the walls, and it's very personal to Viva."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

"You can tell there's a crossover here between the Bergen style and the handcrafted Trolls style. It's colorful, and because Viva makes things out of candy, the interior is filled with lots of candy props that are stacked on the wall. As a nod to Poppy's interest in scrapbooking, Viva is really interested in origami, so you have a paper crane in there, too."
—MATTHEW PAULSON, LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR

1, 6: Young-Ji Cha • 2: Craig Kellman • 3, 4, 7, 8: Ryan Carlson • 5: James Ng • 9: Tom MacDougall • 10: Ryan Gerrish

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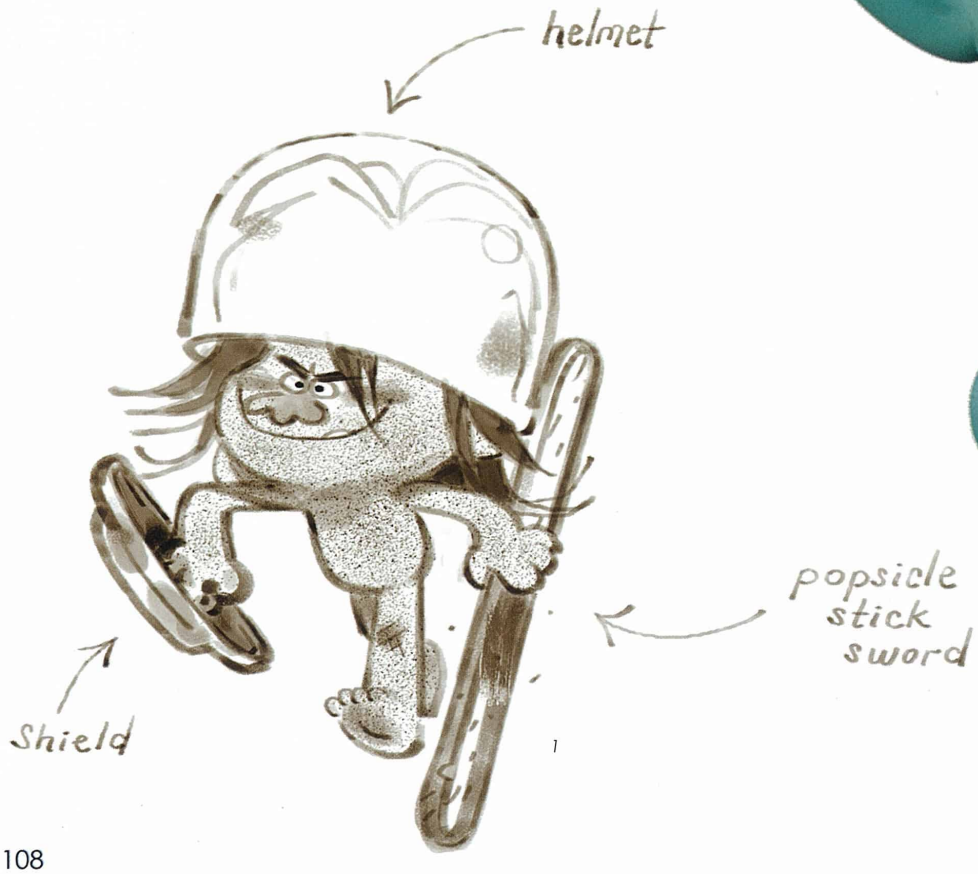
CLAY

"Clay took a little while to find, so when we landed on the idea that he's the fun guy, but he wants to do boring things like accounting or joining a sad book club, we thought that seemed like a funny idea. He's the middle child who might get a little overlooked at times, but he could really take charge if he's given a proper chance. At the same time, being the class clown is still a part of his DNA; it never fully goes away—he just kind of overcompensates to try and look more serious so people take him seriously."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

"Scott 'Kid Cudi' Mescudi helped us find the voice and character of Clay, who is the trustworthy right hand of Viva. He provides unexpected comedy in a unique way that only Cudi could have delivered—while flexing an argyle jumpsuit, no less!"
—JOHN SWANSON, CO-PRODUCER

1, 3–14: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 2: Character render



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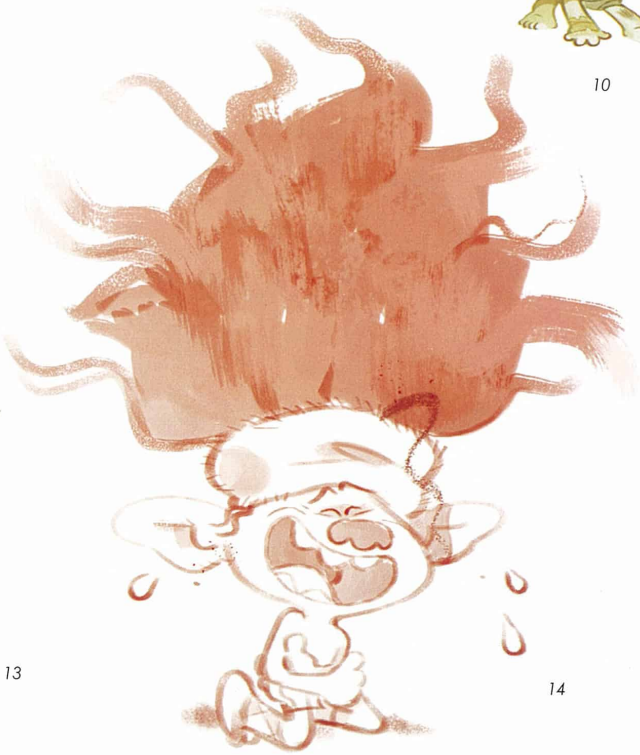

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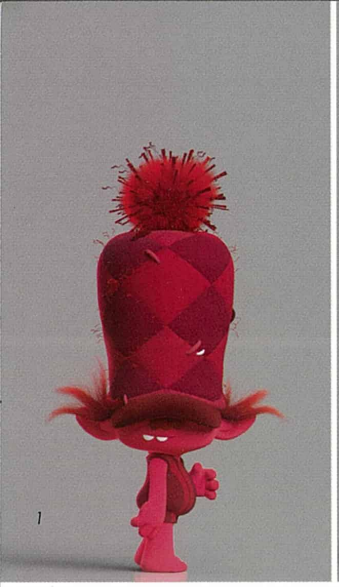
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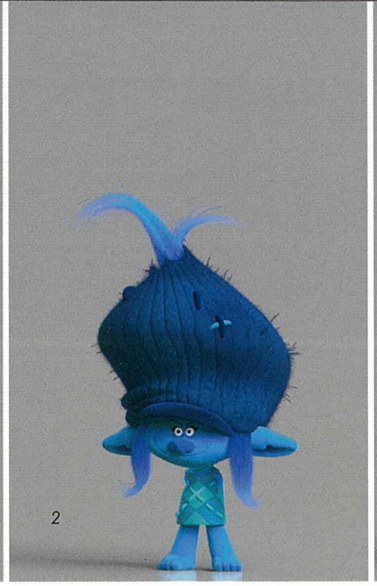
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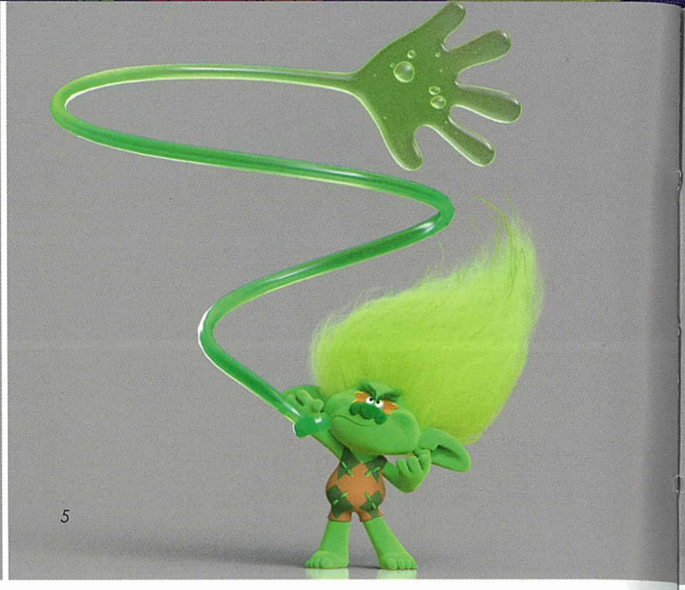
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GOLF TROLLS

"The golf Trolls are fun. They're different in the sense that they've been raised in a different environment than the pop Trolls, but they have the same origin. Because they've been raised in this abandoned mini golf course, they're a little bit gun-shy and a little bit nervous and a little bit spooky. They've adapted themselves to ball up into golf balls and roll around and then 'un-ball' and be their normal Trolls selves."
—SPENCER KNAPP, CROWDS SUPERVISOR

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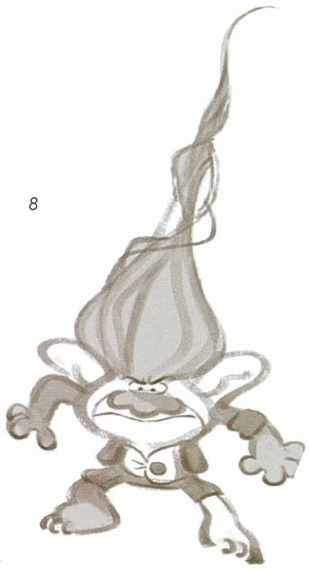
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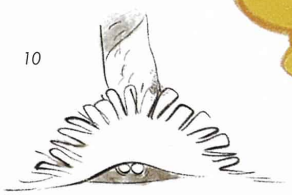
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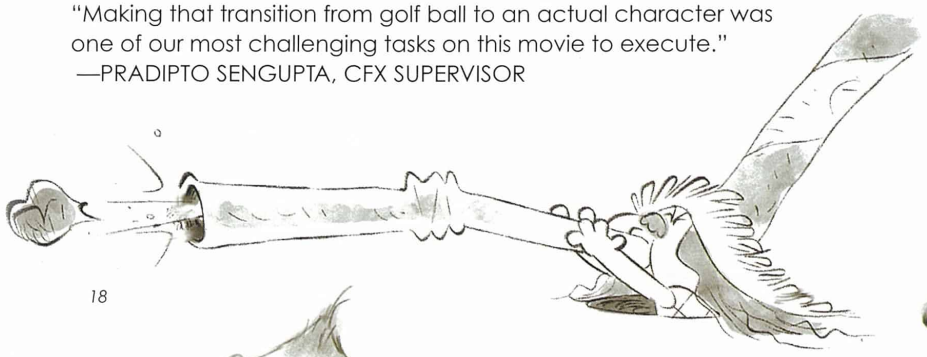
"Making that transition from golf ball to an actual character was one of our most challenging tasks on this movie to execute."
—PRADIPTO SENGUPTA, CFX SUPERVISOR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1–5, 13–17: Taylor Krahenbuhl (character design); Oscar Ayala (art model) • 6–12, 18–24: Taylor Krahenbuhl

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1: Dave Cooper • 2: Taylor Krahenbuhl

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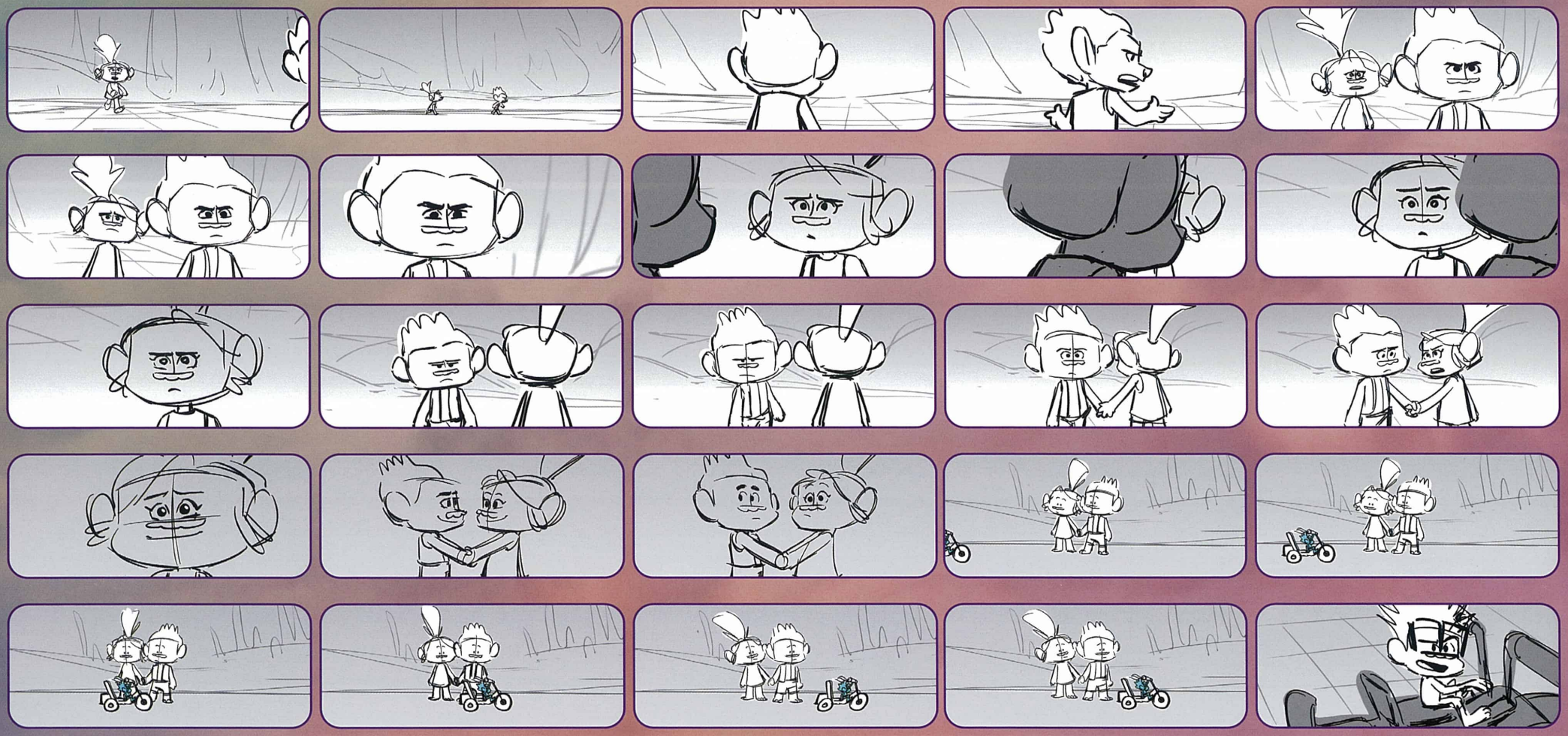
"It isn't until Bridget and King Gristle show up that it is revealed that the Trolls in the golf course do have contingencies just in case a Bergen shows up: they use the sticky hands, the ticker tape, and all the terrible, terrible gifts you get at an arcade to trap Bridget and King Gristle and feed them to a fire-breathing clown head."
—COLIN JACK, HEAD OF STORY

RAGE DOME

MOUNT RAGEOUS

OUTRAGEOUS MOUNT RAGEOUS

Mount Rageous is a gleaming metropolis with buildings and infrastructure constructed entirely from diamonds and other gems. Even so, the place feels more artificial than elegant, and there's certainly nothing warm and fuzzy about it. There are no adults in the population either, only zealous teenagers who are obsessed with fame and celebrity—none more so than Velvet and Veneer. This talentless pair has become famous by using the talents of Floyd: they've trapped him inside a diamond perfume bottle and spritz themselves with his essence at will. With each spritz, though, Floyd gets weaker and weaker . . .



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PREVIOUS SPREAD: Dave Cooper • 1: Wendy Sullivan • 2, 3: Kenard Pak

MOUNT
RAGEOUS

MOUNT RAGEOUS

"It's super colorful, and it has that Vegas feel to it because it's the place where people go to perform—it has a lot of glowing lights and signs and neon. The one thing about it is that it's populated by teens. We were making a lot of choices based on that: what would be fun for teenagers? If a teenager can't drive, what kind of cars would we put them in? All the teenagers wear one-piece pajamas and hoodies. We were trying to make it very universal and casual so that they look like they're these playful, fun, doll-like characters. You can imagine pajamas made out of a solid piece of rubber. That's a costume we kept repeating for males and females. We played around a lot with the hairstyles. Their hair is made out of clay tubes, like those kids' shape-making machines where you put clay in and smash it, and it puts out a noodle strip."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

"We want to transport the audience to a place they've never been before. Mount Rageous is something really special. It took us a long time to find the place. We wanted it to have a sci-fi element that the other movies didn't have, but it had to be naturalistic. We were definitely inspired by *Blade Runner*. I love the photography of David LaChapelle; he's captured this way of photographing celebrity that's candy-coated but also dangerous, so we brought in all these elements and the artists who work with it."
—WALT DOHRN, DIRECTOR

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1, 2: Kenard Pak • 3–7 Priscilla Wong

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CITY CONSTRUCTION

"In *Trolls World Tour*, we had a lot of effects design rules, because we did stay in a lot of Trolls-scaled environments, and everything was very much made up of felt and cloth, so the effects had to be made of those kind of materials. So if a character falls or runs across the desert of the western area in *Trolls World Tour*, for instance, that dust needed to eject little fibers so it looked like the fabric was kicking up lint, so to speak. When we get to Mount Rageous, in the third act of *Trolls Band Together*, that set of rules is completely thrown out because all of a sudden, we're at a bigger scale: the characters are bigger, and the environment doesn't have any fabric in it at all, so we can't do dust in Mount Rageous because that doesn't work in that environment. We had to do 'dust' that is a little bit more glittery."
—STEPHEN WOOD, HEAD OF EFFECTS

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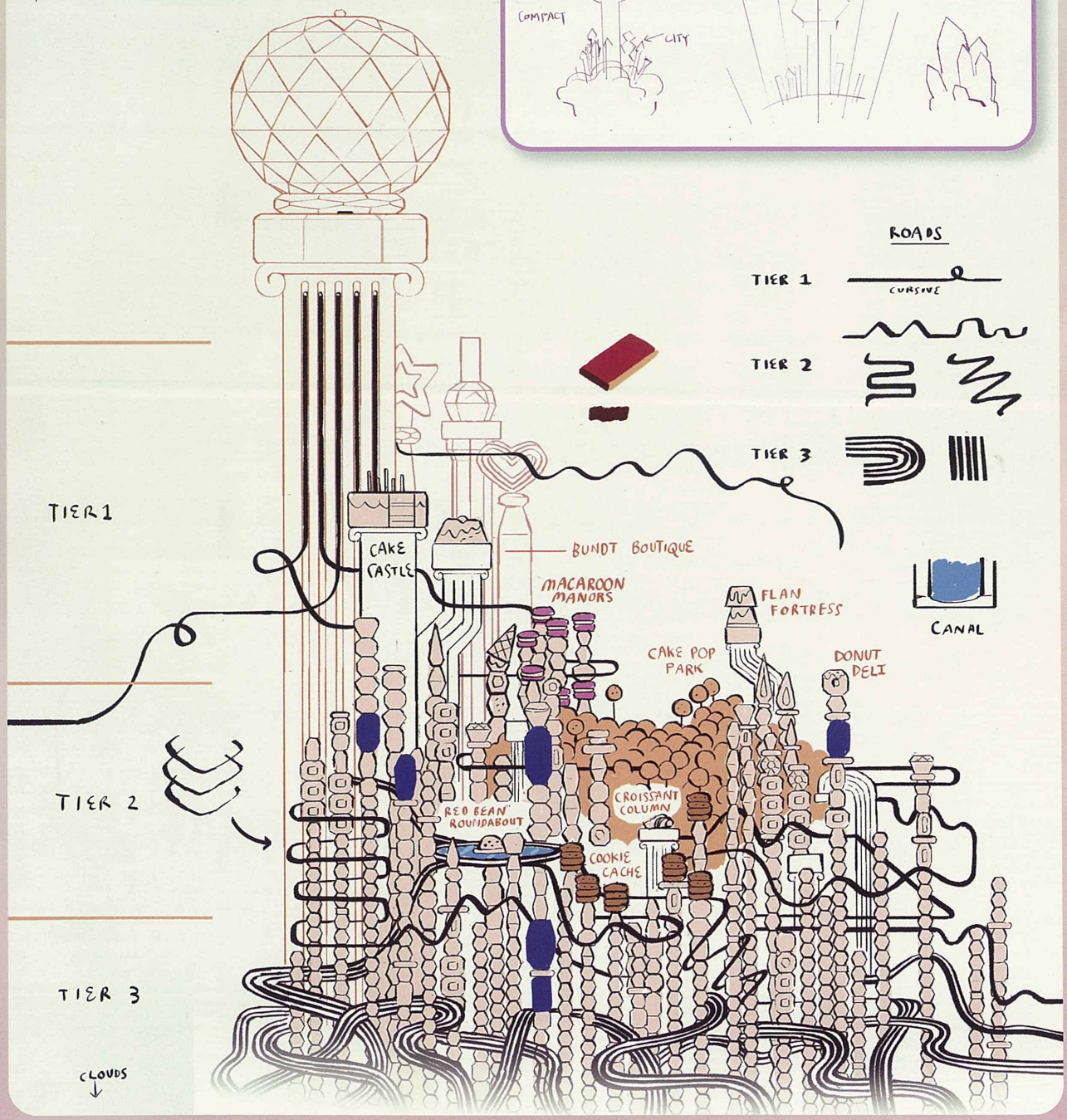

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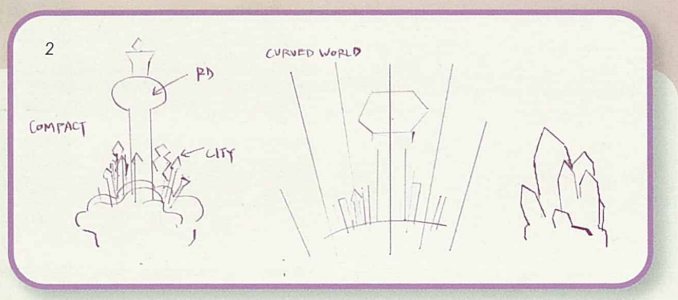

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"Most of the third act takes place in Mount Rageous, which is almost a completely different design aesthetic than the beautiful, plush, soft, almost handcrafted-inspired look of the Trolls world, so you're really bifurcating your approach to what you concentrate on in terms of the design and building the world. Now that you're in Mount Rageous, all of those rules that you've established for the Trolls section don't apply. That was probably one of the most challenging things: trying to combine the two into one scene during the chase at the end, in which we have Rhonda and the Trolls in Mount Rageous."
—MARC SCOTT, VFX SUPERVISOR

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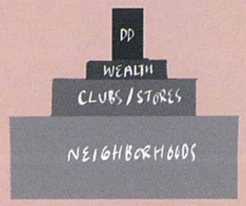
1, 5: Stevie Lewis • 2, 6: Kenard Pak • 3, 4, 7: Sébastien Piquet

MT RAGEOUS CITY VIEW



LESS DENSE

MORE DENSE

BOOM BOX

RAGEDOME

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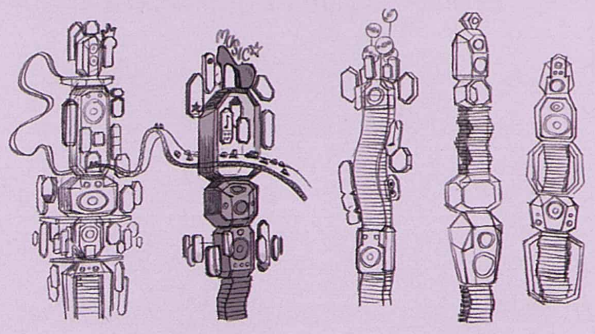

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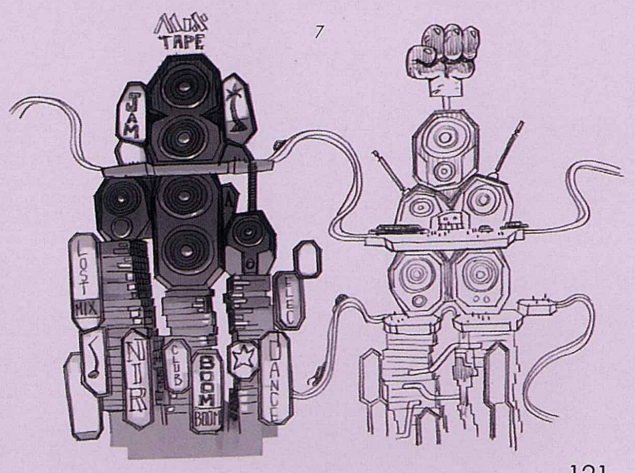

MOUNT
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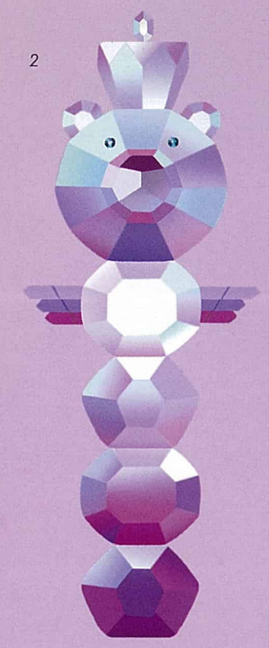

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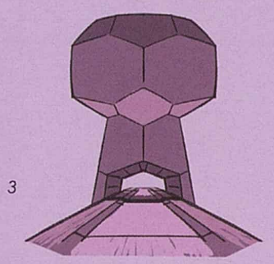

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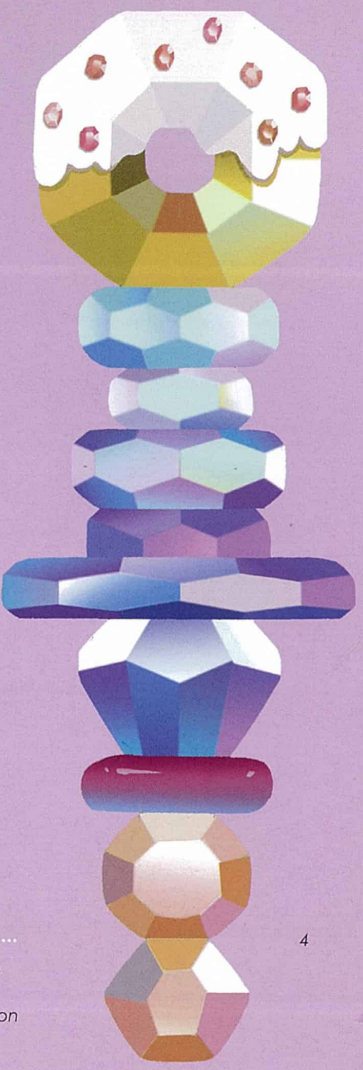

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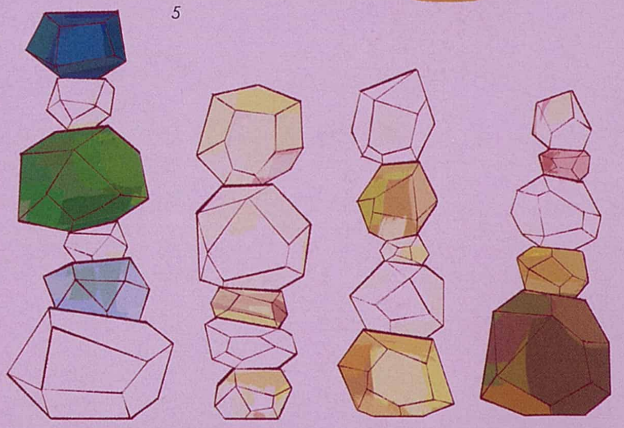
1: Kenard Pak; • 2, 4, 6–8: Stevie Lewis • 3: Sébastien Piquet • 5: James Ng • OVERLEAF: Ryan Carlson



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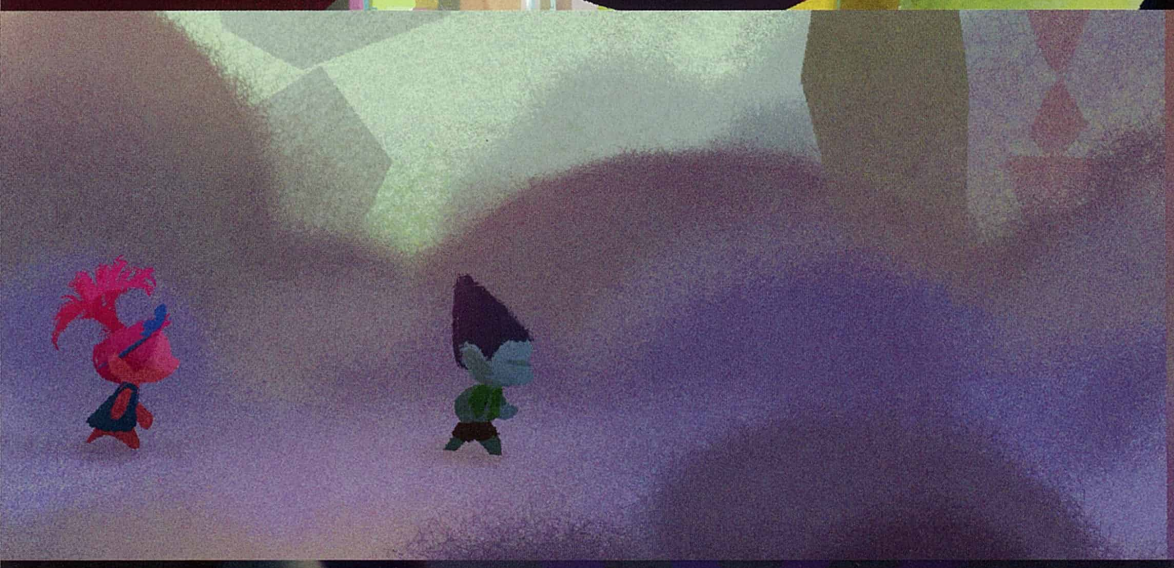
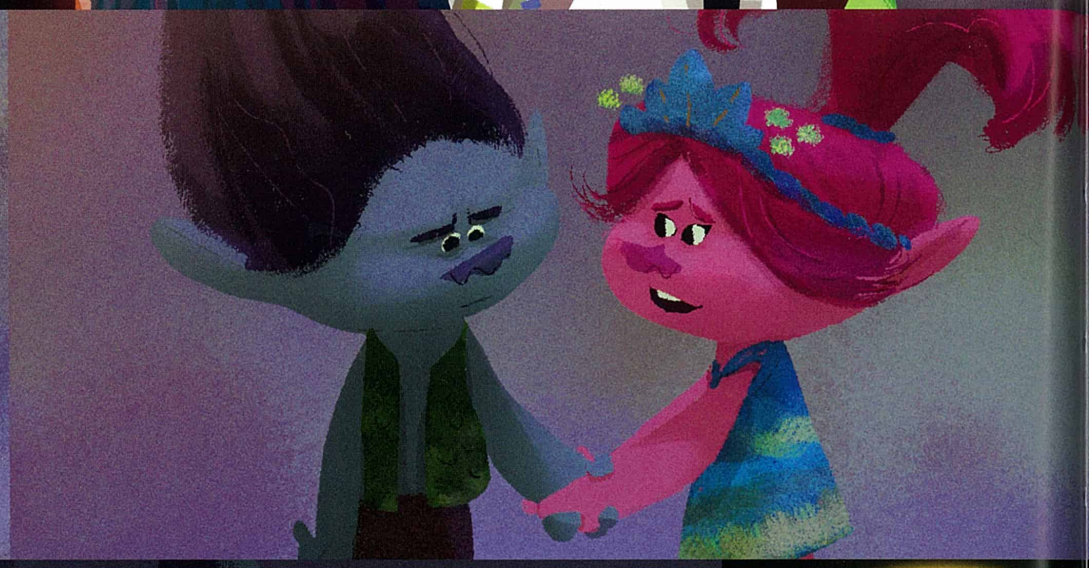
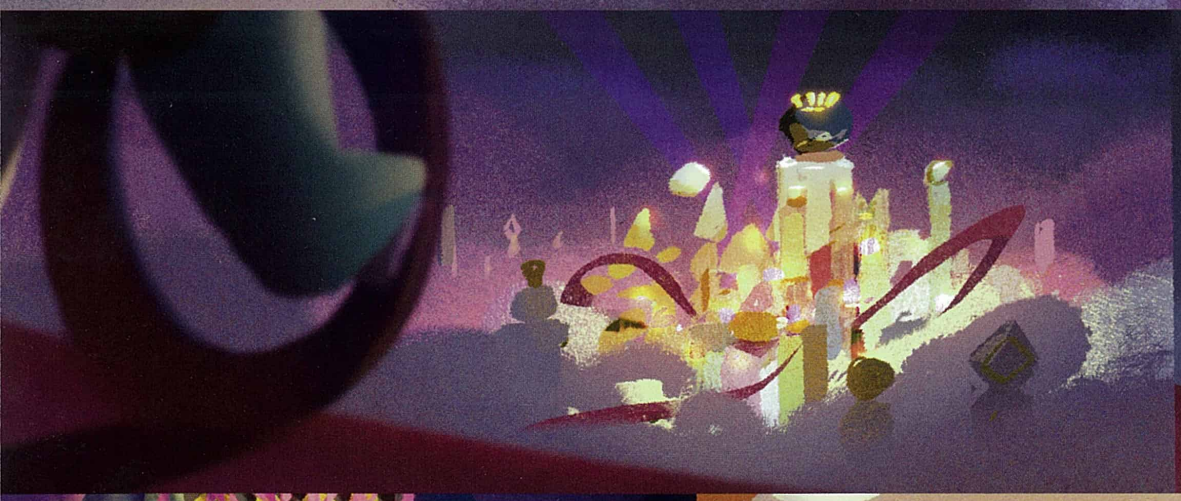
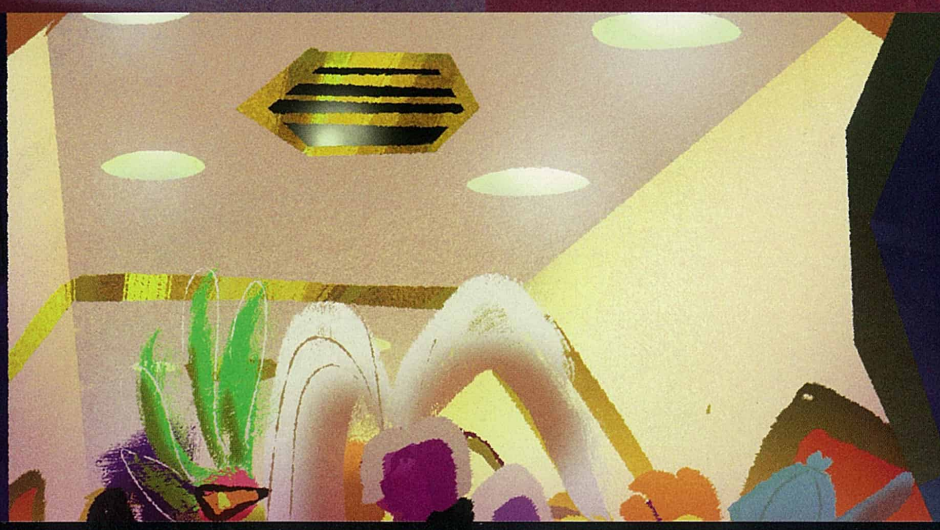
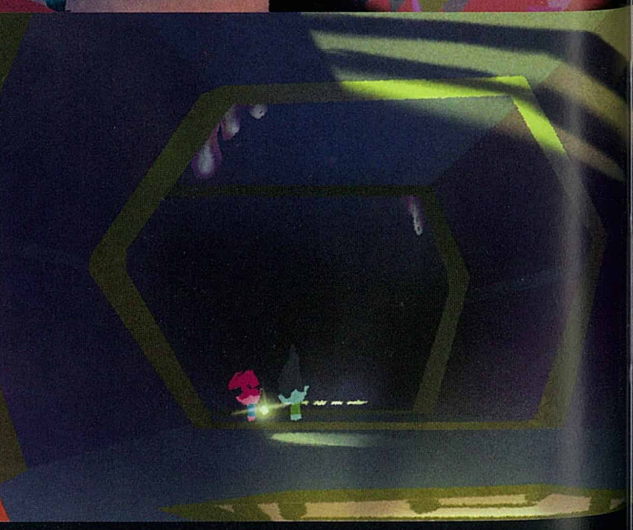
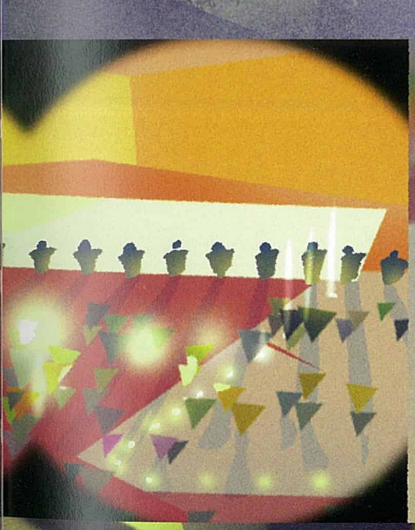


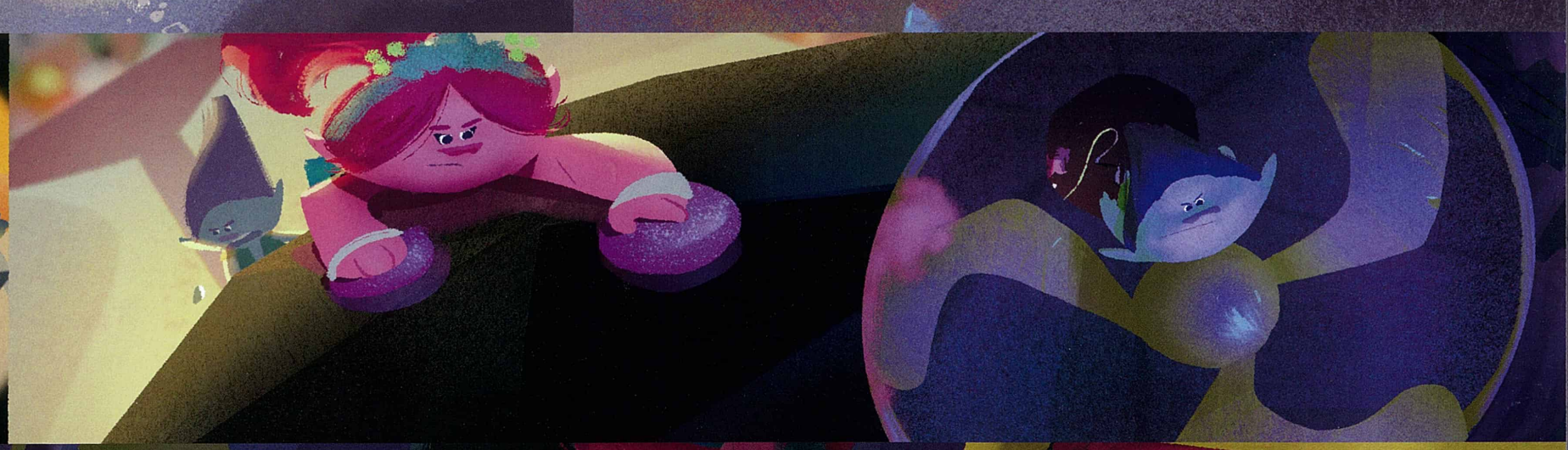










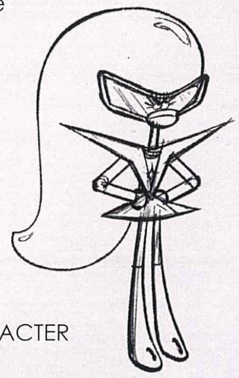


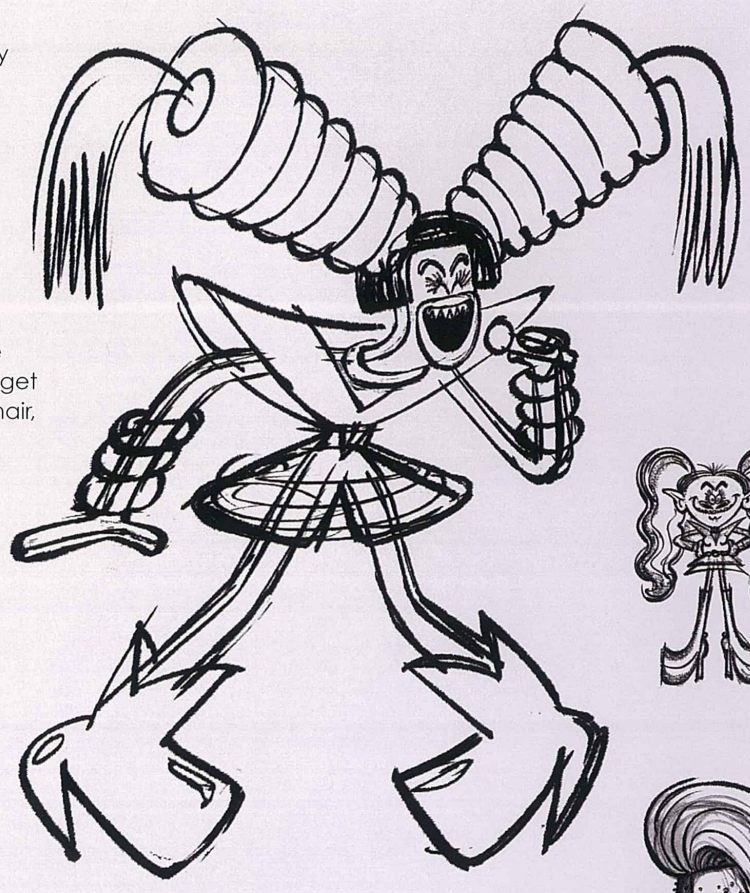
VELVET & VENEER

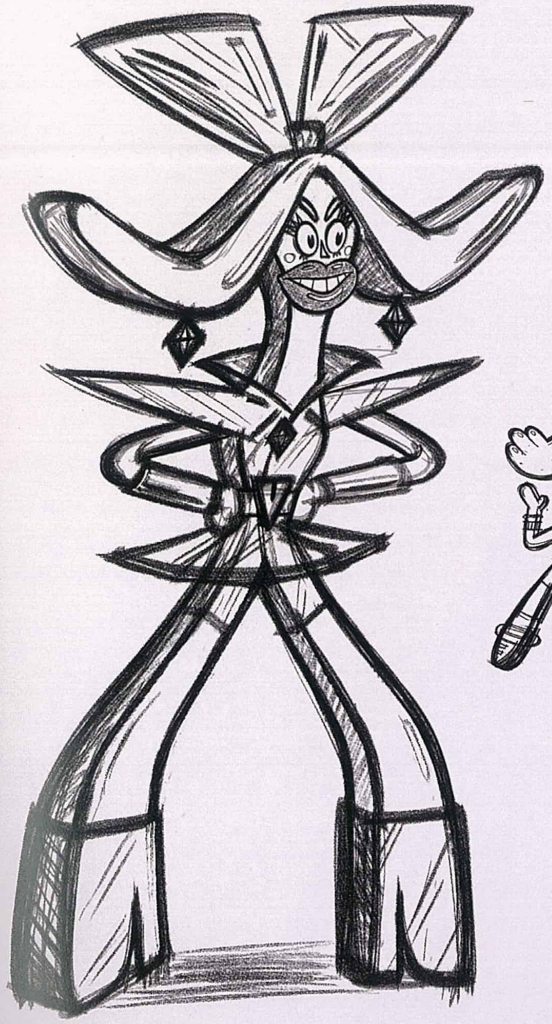
"Originally, the villains were catlike creatures, but that wasn't really working for anybody. Eventually, one of our talented character artists, Craig Kellman, started doing these drawings of these plastic-looking characters that would theoretically exist in this ever-expanding Trollsverse. Making them look like 1940s rubber-hose characters was an aesthetic that we haven't seen but also oddly fits in this world. That's the great thing about these movies: they're always a patchwork quilt of styles, and in every different land you go to, even in *Trolls World Tour*, there's something uniquely different about each one. Velvet and Veneer are just an extension of that. To contrast the perniciousness of these archvillains, we wanted to play them comedically. Once we knew that, we cast comedy geniuses Amy Schumer and Andrew Rannells in the roles, and we were able to strike that balance. They're the kind of creatures who believe they deserve something but don't have to work for it—particularly Velvet. Velvet is very much driven to be famous at any cost, even at the expense of Branch's brother Floyd. Veneer is along for the ride. He just wants to hang out with his sister. Unfortunately, his sister is into a lot of evil nonsense. As the movie progresses, you see the cracks in Veneer—he's not entirely sure about or cool with what Velvet is doing. It makes for an interesting arc of that character and makes him somewhat redeemable toward the end of the film."
—COLIN JACK,
HEAD OF STORY

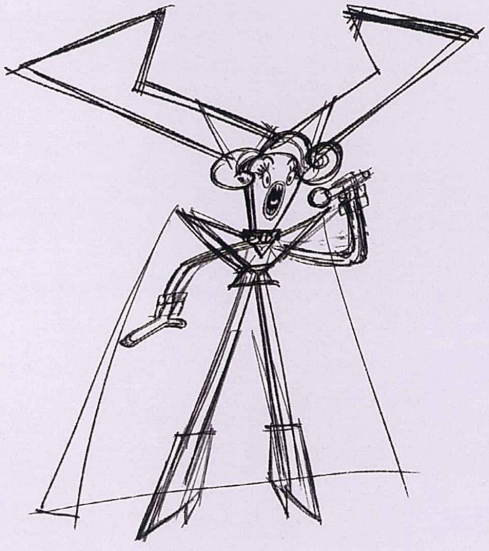
THIS SPREAD: *Craig Kellman*

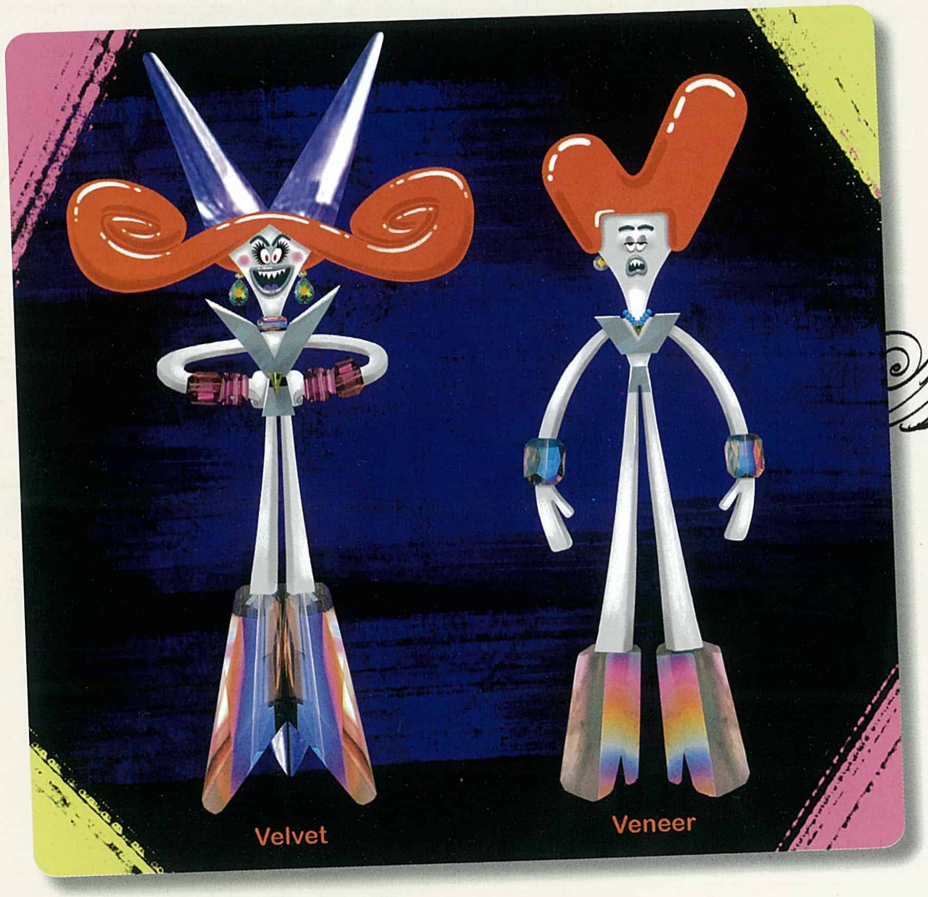
"Velvet and Veneer have very long, stringy limbs, so when the animators ask for a simple shape on a character, that usually ends up being quite complicated to achieve. If the shape is a little bit off, then it's not going to work for them, so we have to hit those simple shapes exactly. There's no anatomy book for Trolls! It's what the animators draw for us; they're really helpful, too; they'll give us little drawovers and tell us what shapes they're after. That's usually a bit of a battle just to get exact, because sometimes it's just a little hair, a little line out, just the width of a line they're after. You can see when it's animated that it's not right, so getting clean and simple lines is usually a complicated endeavor."
—MARTIN COSTELLO, CHARACTER TD SUPERVISOR

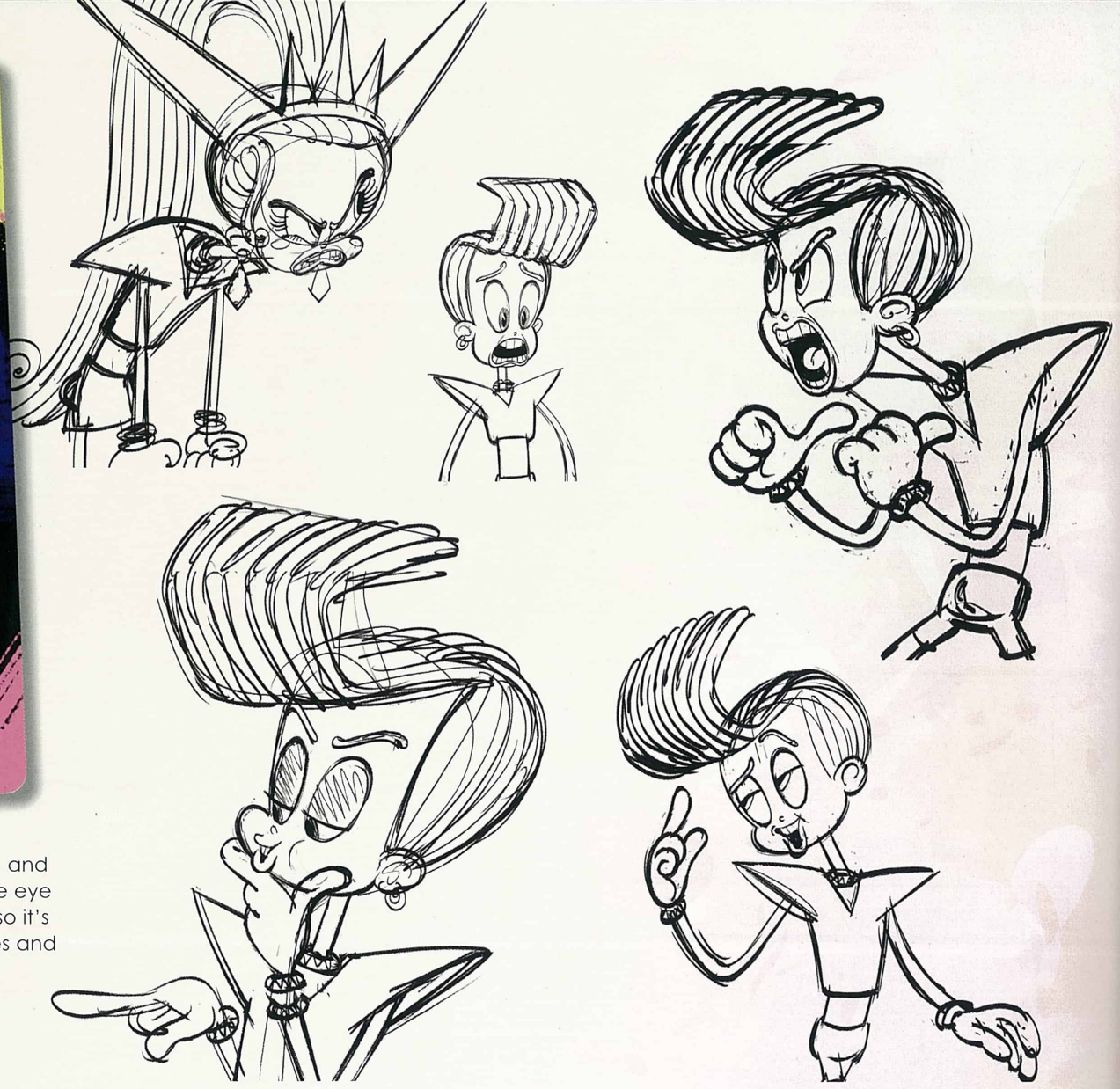






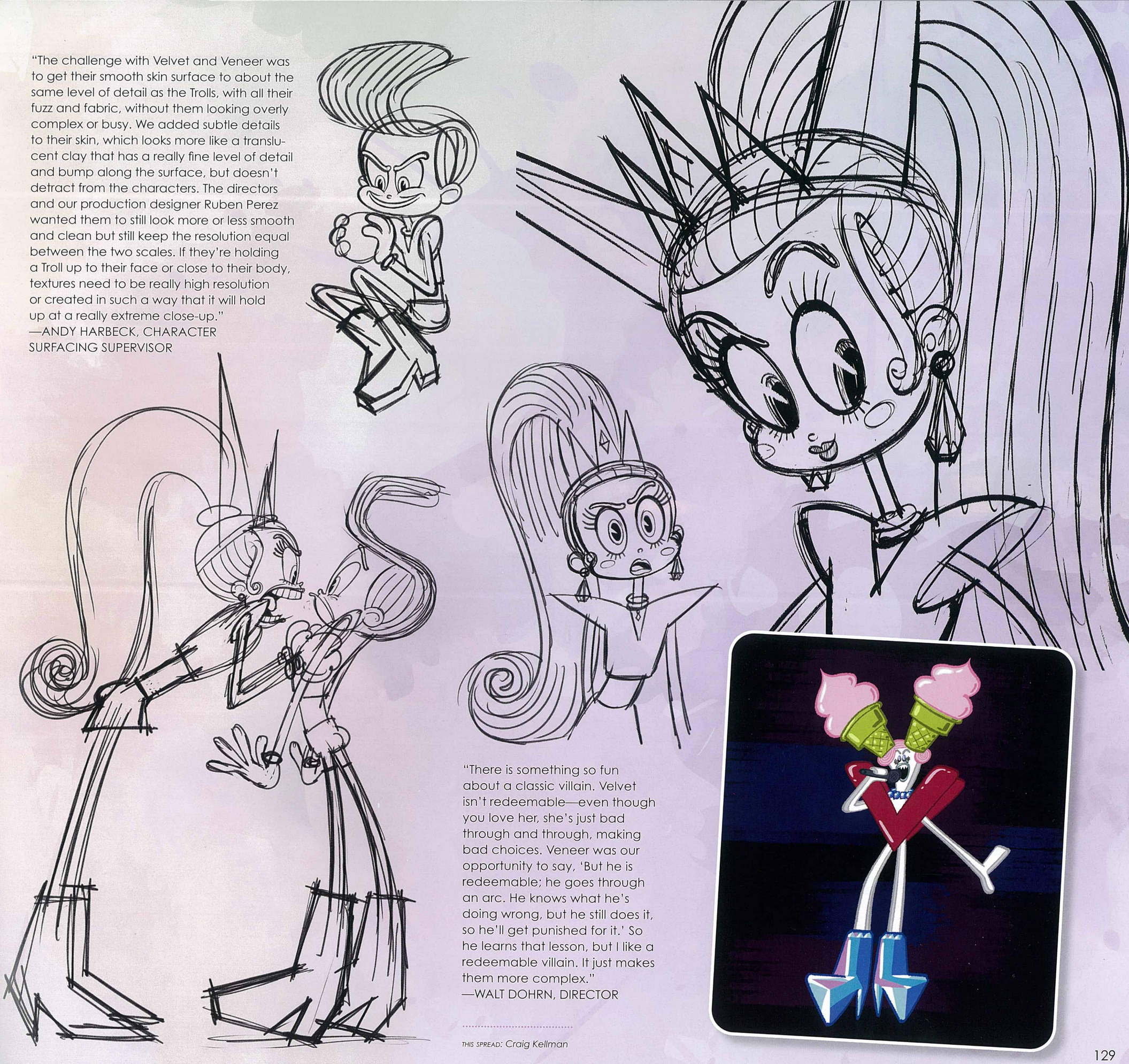






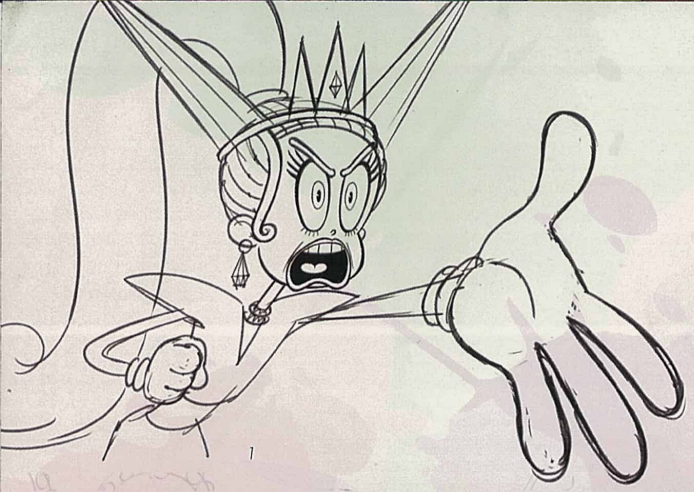
"Velvet and Veneer are very reflective; their design is very comic book–ish, and the idea of lighting these things is tricky because we have very graphic-like eye reflections, what we call eye specular hits. Those are shaped as a design, so it's not really reflecting the design off in space. We had to create these shapes and let the eyes reflect them, but also follow them as you would see in comic-book drawings. It was a whole new 2D-comic book-meets-CG-character design that lighting had to figure out how to make work. We've really never seen characters look like this in any of our films before."
—GABRIEL PORTNOF, HEAD OF LIGHTING

"The challenge with Velvet and Veneer was to get their smooth skin surface to about the same level of detail as the Trolls, with all their fuzz and fabric, without them looking overly complex or busy. We added subtle details to their skin, which looks more like a translucent clay that has a really fine level of detail and bump along the surface, but doesn't detract from the characters. The directors and our production designer Ruben Perez wanted them to still look more or less smooth and clean but still keep the resolution equal between the two scales. If they're holding a Troll up to their face or close to their body, textures need to be really high resolution or created in such a way that it will hold up at a really extreme close-up."
—ANDY HARBECK, CHARACTER SURFACING SUPERVISOR



"There is something so fun about a classic villain. Velvet isn't redeemable—even though you love her, she's just bad through and through, making bad choices. Veneer was our opportunity to say, 'But he is redeemable; he goes through an arc. He knows what he's doing wrong, but he still does it, so he'll get punished for it.' So he learns that lesson, but I like a redeemable villain. It just makes them more complex."
—WALT DOHRN, DIRECTOR

THIS SPREAD: *Craig Kellman*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"If either of them do have a bit of a moral compass, it's definitely Veneer. You'll see him struggling a little bit with the fact that they're doing this and questioning it, and then at the end of the movie, he's the one that really comes around and is like, 'You know, what we're doing is wrong, and this is not okay,' and so he has a little bit of a redemptive arc."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

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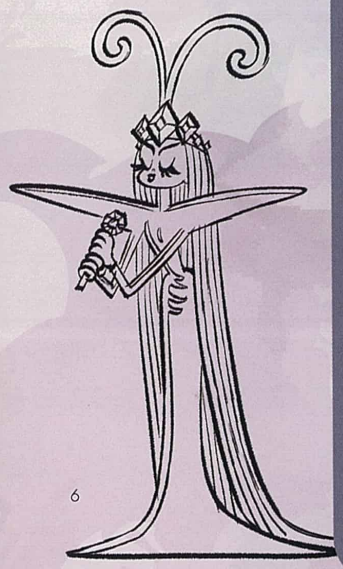
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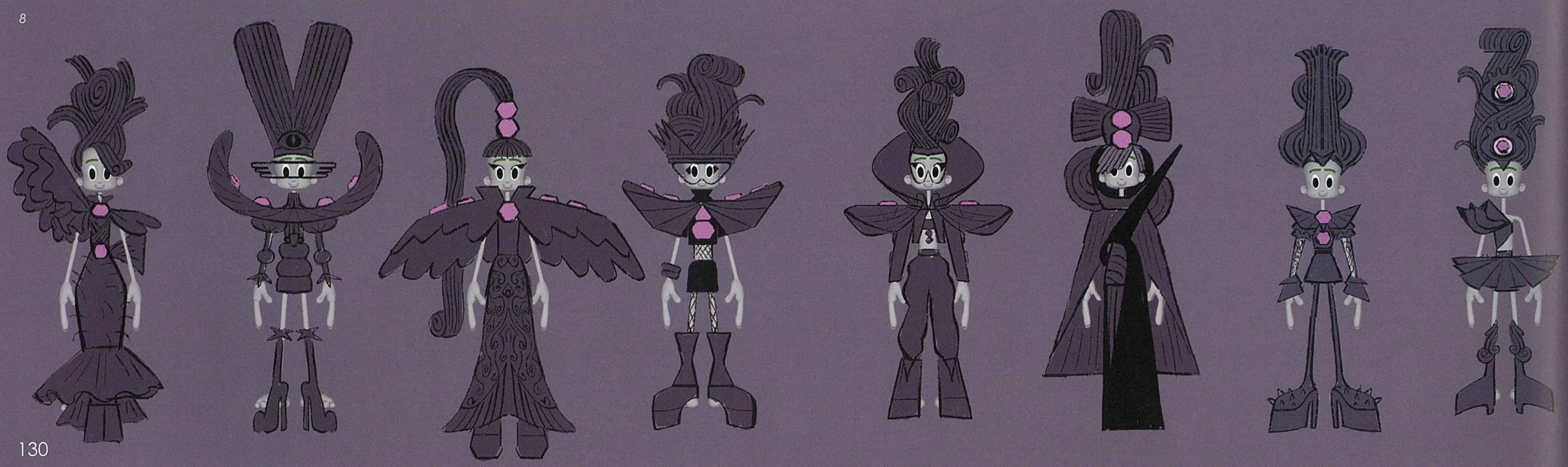
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"It's such a collaborative thing, what we do. Walt always had a very clear picture of our villains, Velvet and Veneer, being these siblings who were basically trying to cheat the system to become stars. To me, they really came alive when we recorded Andrew Rannells and Amy Schumer, and I thought, *Oh, these are really adorable. They're not vicious or malicious; they're just extremely lazy.* They became these wonderful, unique villains that I haven't seen before."
—NICK FLETCHER, LEAD EDITOR

1–3, 6, 7: Craig Kellman • 4, 5: James Ng • 8, 11: Stevie Lewis • 9: Craig Kellman (character design); Yung-Lo Chang (art model) • 10: Stevie Lewis, Ruben Perez, Craig Kellman (character design); Yung-Lo Chang (art model)

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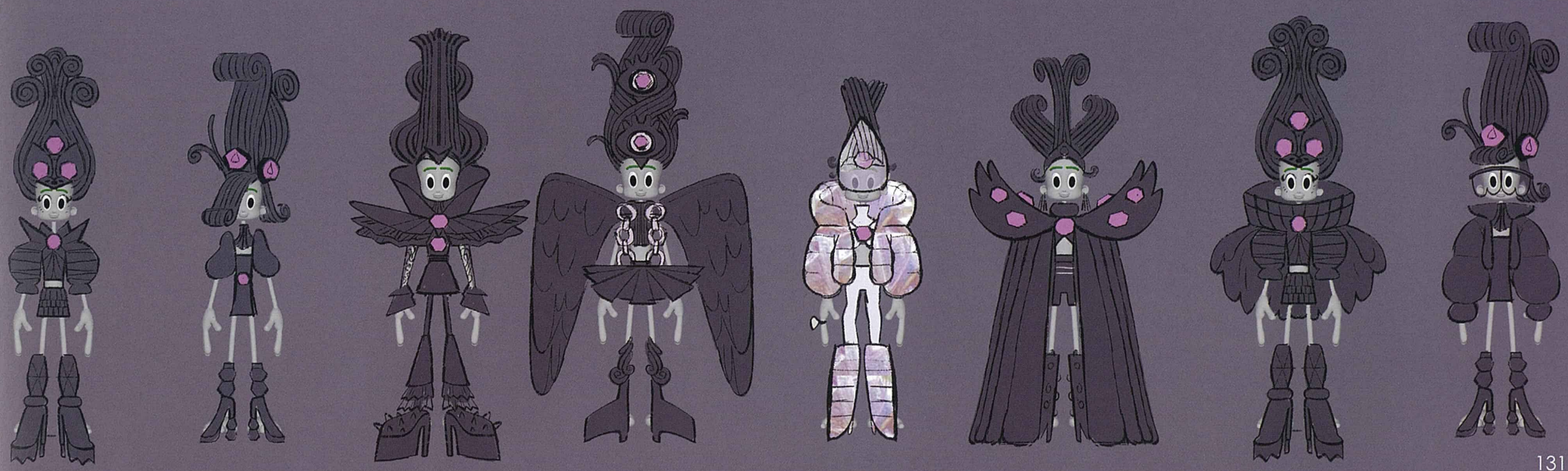

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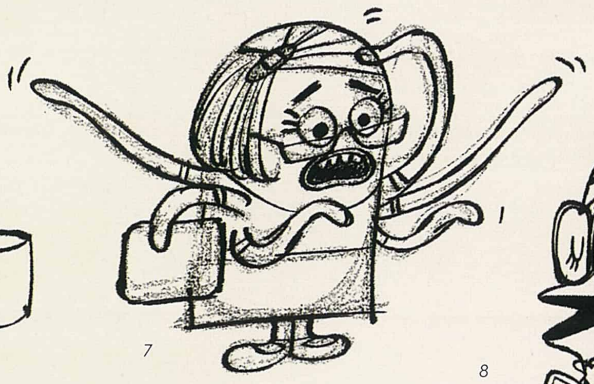

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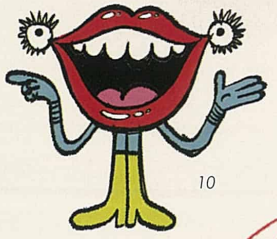

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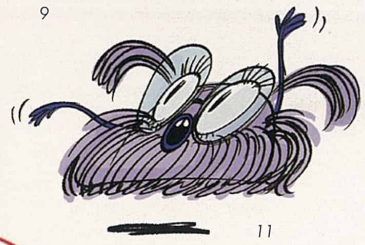

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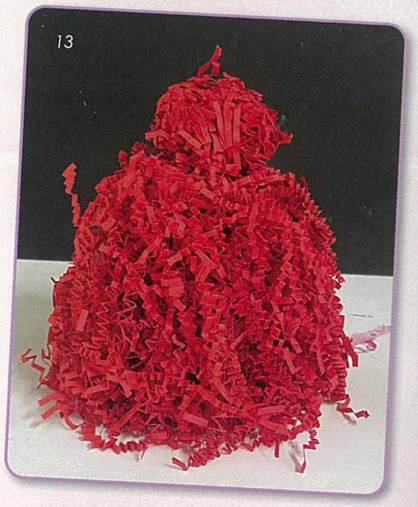

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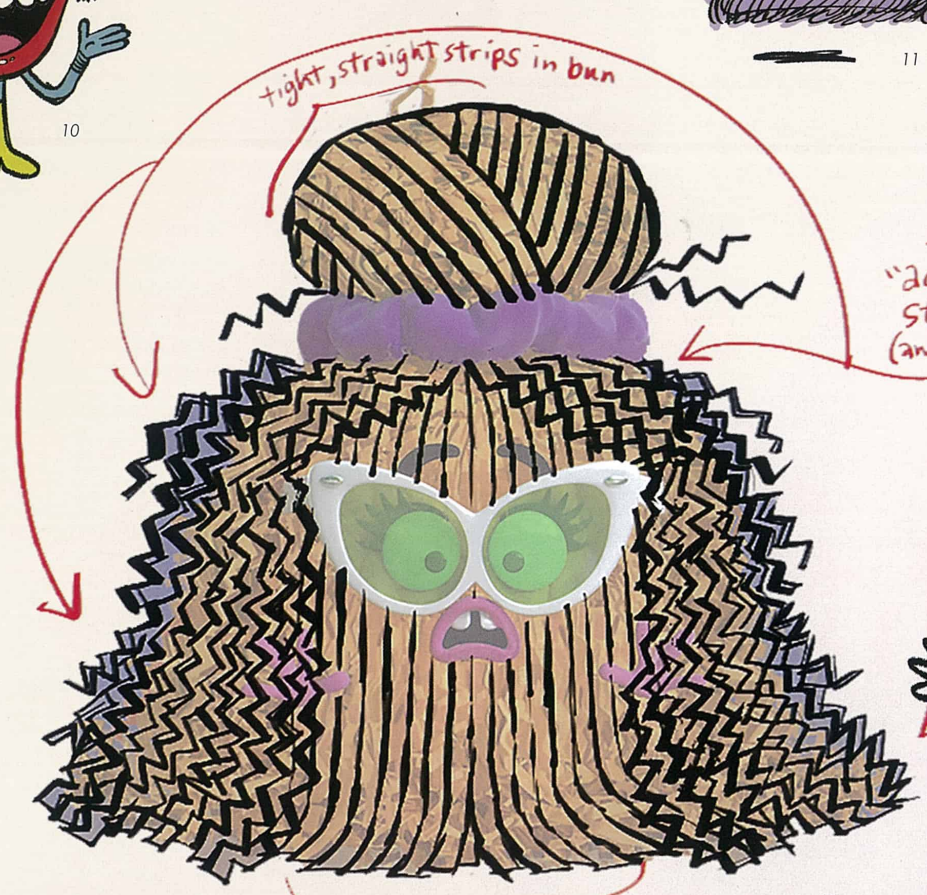

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CRIMP

"Crimp is definitely one of my favorite characters, not only because of who she is—and I think she's got some really funny, unique moments in the film—but also, she's just different than anything else we've seen in the *Trolls* world before. She looks almost like a mop. Her crimped hair and the fact that her facial features seem to float on her head give us a lot of freedom and fun expression. We also can have a lot of fun in animation, pulling her limbs in and out of her body at whatever point we want. The crimped hair not only gives this frazzled look to her because she's just got so much to do—she genuinely tries her best to do her job well, and she just happens to be working for two of the worst bosses you probably could ask for—it adds to this idea that she's got this kinetic energy going on. She has flyaways, and we can simulate those, and we can add a little bit of vibration just to give a sense that she's buzzing with energy—they add this feeling that she's not always 100 percent put together."
—BENJAMIN WILLIS, HEAD OF CHARACTER ANIMATION

1-12, 14–22: Craig Kellman • 13: Ruben Perez • 23: Craig Kellman (character design); Yung-Lo Chang (art model)

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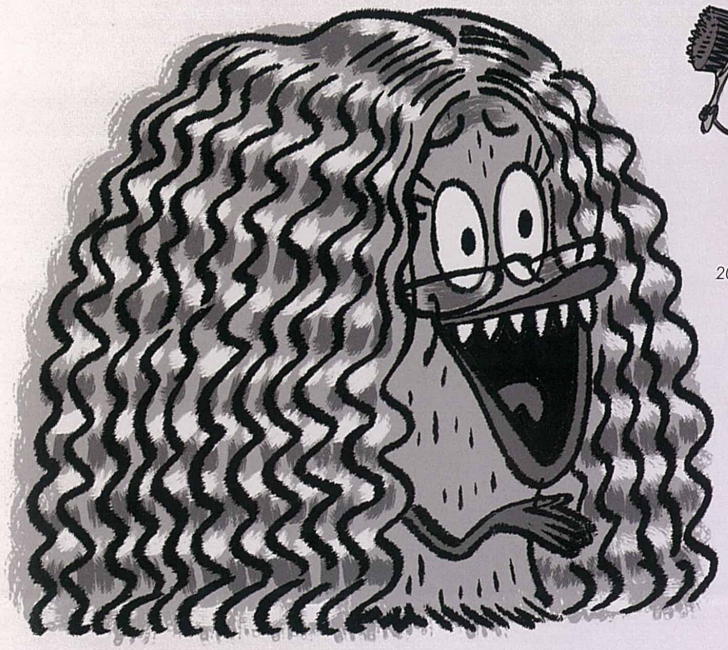

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"Crimp is an interesting character. All of the secondary motions of the paper come from CFX, including all the collisions on the ground whenever she walks. That was pretty fascinating, challenging stuff for us."
—PRADIPTO SENGUPTA, CFX SUPERVISOR

"Crimp—delivered hilariously by Zosia Mamet—is so naive and sweet, she finds the good in people and thinks that everything is so innocent. She doesn't fully realize everything that Velvet and Veneer are doing. She decides to build them a way to stay hydrated during their performances, and she says, 'You can put smoothies and fruit in it, and it'll be healthy!' As she's showing them how to do that, you can just tell that the wheels are turning in Velvet's mind—that's where those Trolls are going to go, and that's how she's going to be able to keep going for longer during her performances without having to stop and come back to the dressing room to steal more Trolls essence. This is really going to elevate Velvet's career. But the all the while, Crimp is just happy to be providing this very innocent smoothie carrier. It isn't until later that Crimp will realize what's actually going on."
—CASSANDRA FANNING,
HEAD OF LOCATIONS

FLOYD

"Floyd, voiced by the talented Troye Sivan, is different from the other brothers. Not only does he have a special connection with Branch, but for most of the movie he is stuck in a bottle, which creates different challenges. Whereas the other brothers are out and about, and you see a lot of their personalities, we had to figure out how Floyd would look and move within the bottle and how we could create that strong bond between him and Branch, so that you felt more of the impetus for them to go save him. So we used his hair. Floyd has a piece of hair that comes over his face. It very much mimics an emo style, but it's also something that we could use as a prop for him—we could use the front bit of his hair to have him hide if he was ashamed, or we could have him pull it out of the way when he felt more confident and self-assured."
—BENJAMIN WILLIS, HEAD OF CHARACTER ANIMATION

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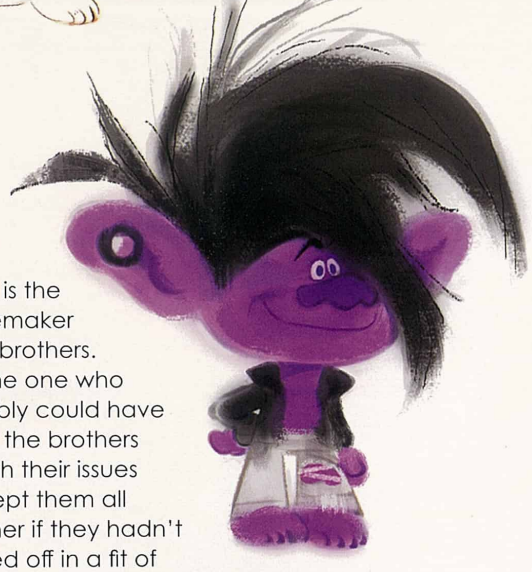

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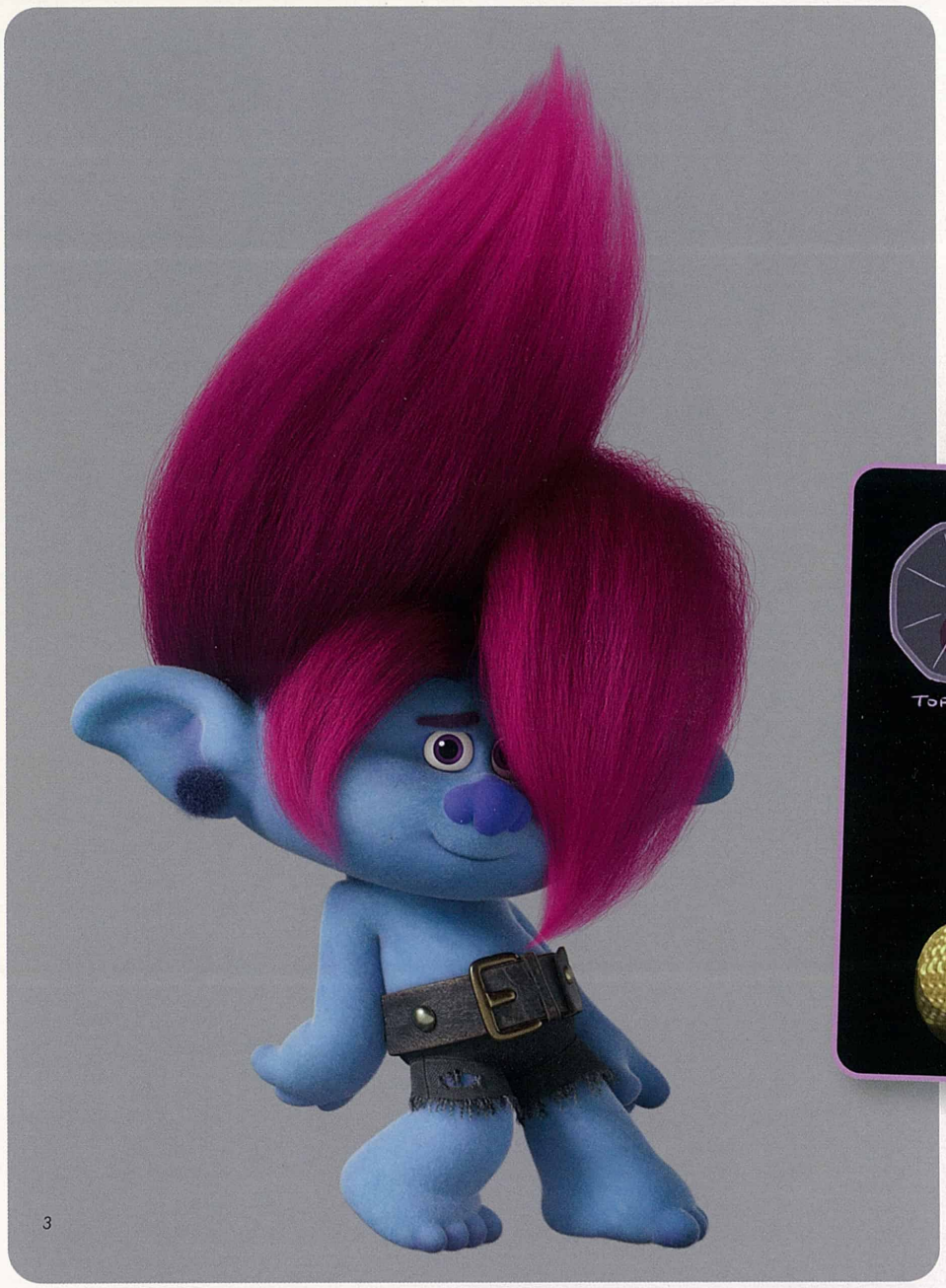
"Floyd is the peacemaker of the brothers. He's the one who probably could have talked the brothers through their issues and kept them all together if they hadn't stormed off in a fit of rage. He could also easily become a caricature pretty quickly, being labeled by John Dory as the sensitive one of the band, but we wanted to make sure that he had this clever wit and this intellect, so he could poke back at the villains and even outsmart them here and there."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR



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"There are a lot of shots looking in and a lot of shots looking out of the perfume bottle Floyd is stuck in, and in terms of lighting, that requires some heavy processing, where you have to refract and reflect everything accurately off the facets. At the same time, we have to do very complicated color correction and all sorts of things we're expected to do without the glass and refraction, and so that required a whole new level of software building."
—GABRIEL PORTNOF, HEAD OF LIGHTING

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1, 2, 6–9: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 3: Character render • 4: Aurora Jimenez • 5: Oscar Ayala (art model)

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"At the end of the movie, Floyd has had all of his essence extracted from him—his color is gone; he's become transparent. He lands on the deck of the ship, and they all think that he's passed. But really, he hasn't, and as he comes back to life, his color slowly starts to come back, and it's like, okay, now the mission is really accomplished. They freed him, and he's not completely expired."
—STEPHEN WOOD,
HEAD OF EFFECTS

THE BOOM BOX

"The Boom Box is the first venue where we get a glimpse of Velvet and Veneer performing. John Dory tells Branch that Floyd was captured, and through flashback, we see John Dory travel to this club. We wanted this place to feel like a very cool, trendy kind of club and also maybe a bit ominous and otherworldly. I think the art department really nailed the vibe. We kept Velvet and Veneer mostly backlit and silhouetted up on stage, so we don't fully reveal what they look like just yet. Once in the club, John Dory climbs up through The Boom Box vents and ends up in the dressing room, where he does indeed find Floyd being held captive."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

"The building itself looks like an actual boom box, so it calls back to the retro quality in the '80s and '90s but still looks almost like a gold or shiny, jewellike version of this."
—MATTHEW PAULSON, LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR

1: Stevie Lewis • 2: Sébastien Piquet • 3: Dave Cooper

2

BOOM
BOOM

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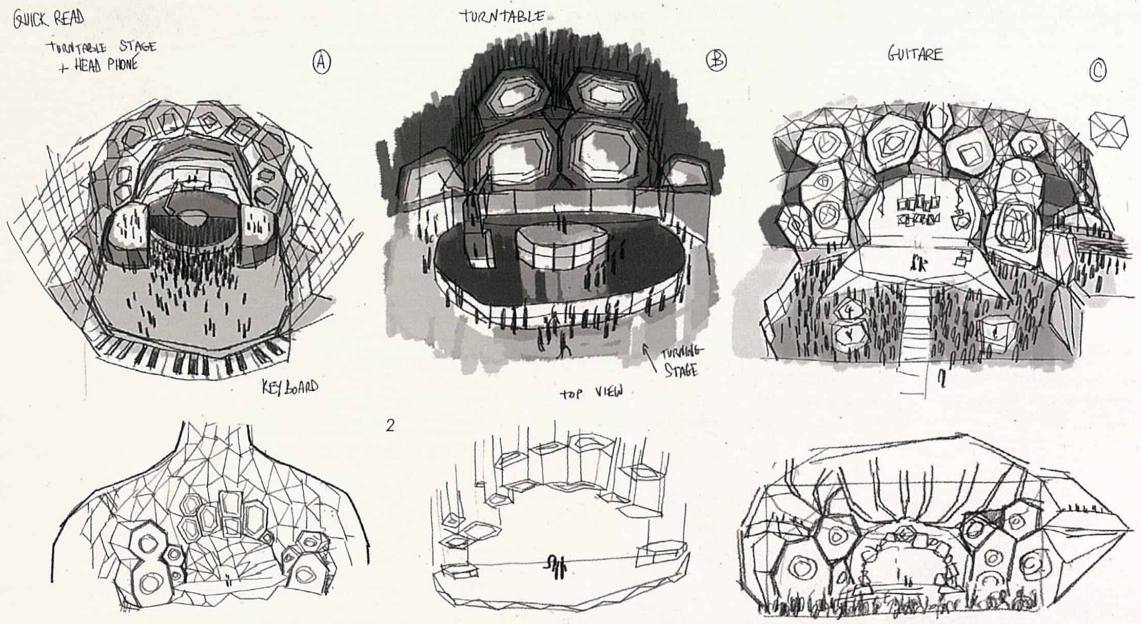

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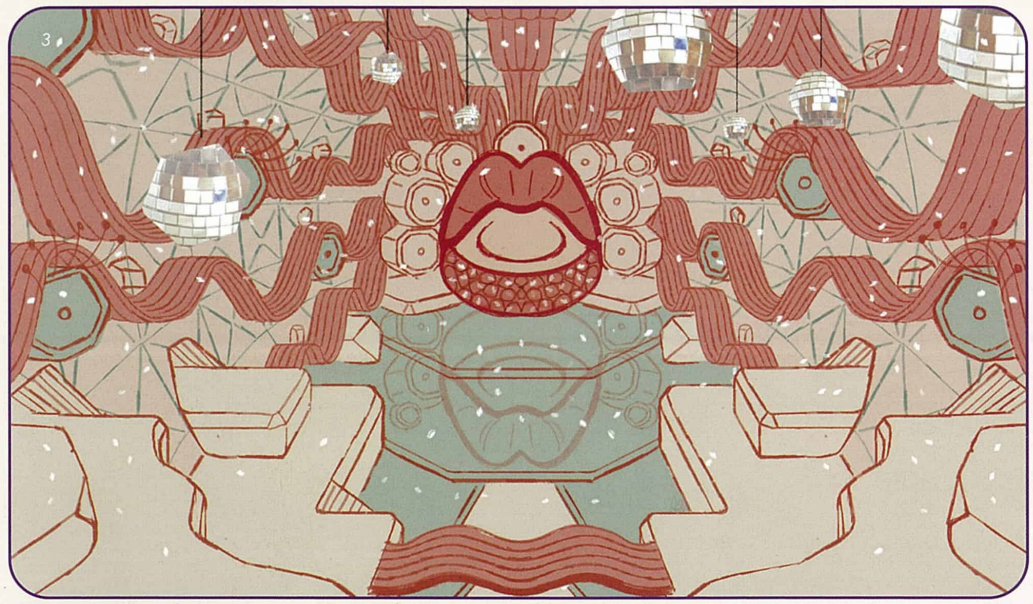

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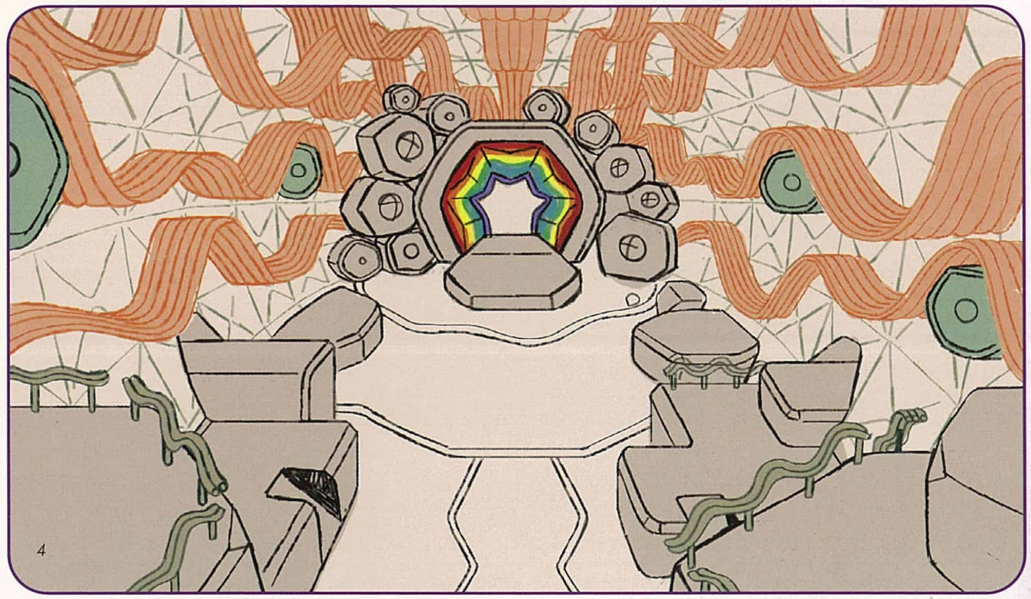

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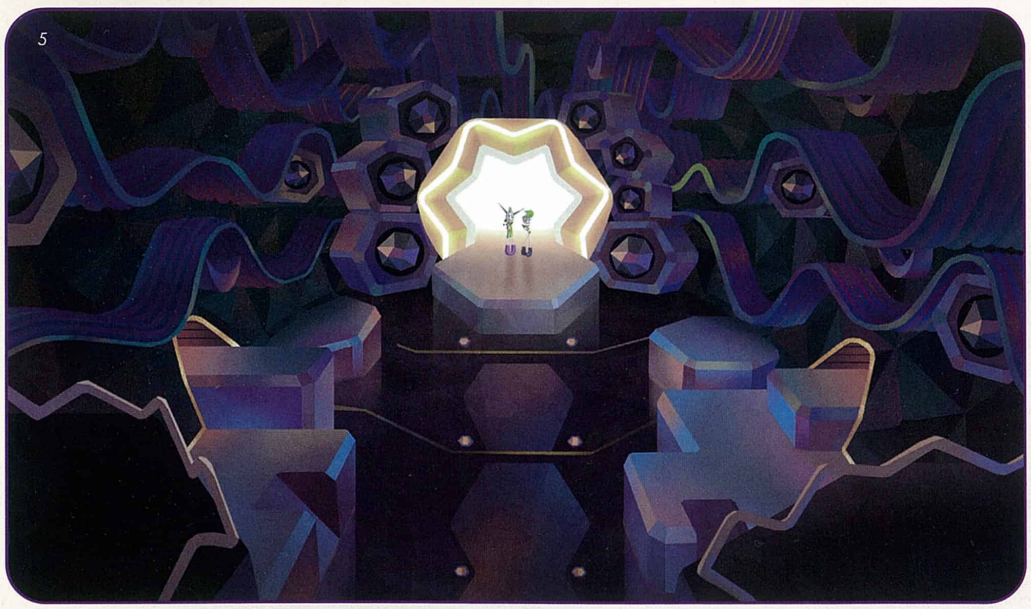

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1, 2, 6: Sébastien Piquet • 3–5, 7–9: Stevie Lewis

"We were trying to be a little bit economical, so the dressing rooms in the Rage Dome and The Boom Box share a lot of pieces and a lot of furniture. It's definitely still calling on that same theme of lots of jewel-type elements. The walls are shaped like a gem in and of themselves—everything is faceted. We have lots of hexagonal shapes; we have a toilet in there, and even that is hexagonal. There's lots of play on materials, like plastic and rubber, and that's something that we had to keep in mind. While we were modeling the shape, we were not primarily interested in the texture or the color, but we still had to support that idea so that it looked like plastic and rubber in the end."
—MATTHEW PAULSON, LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR

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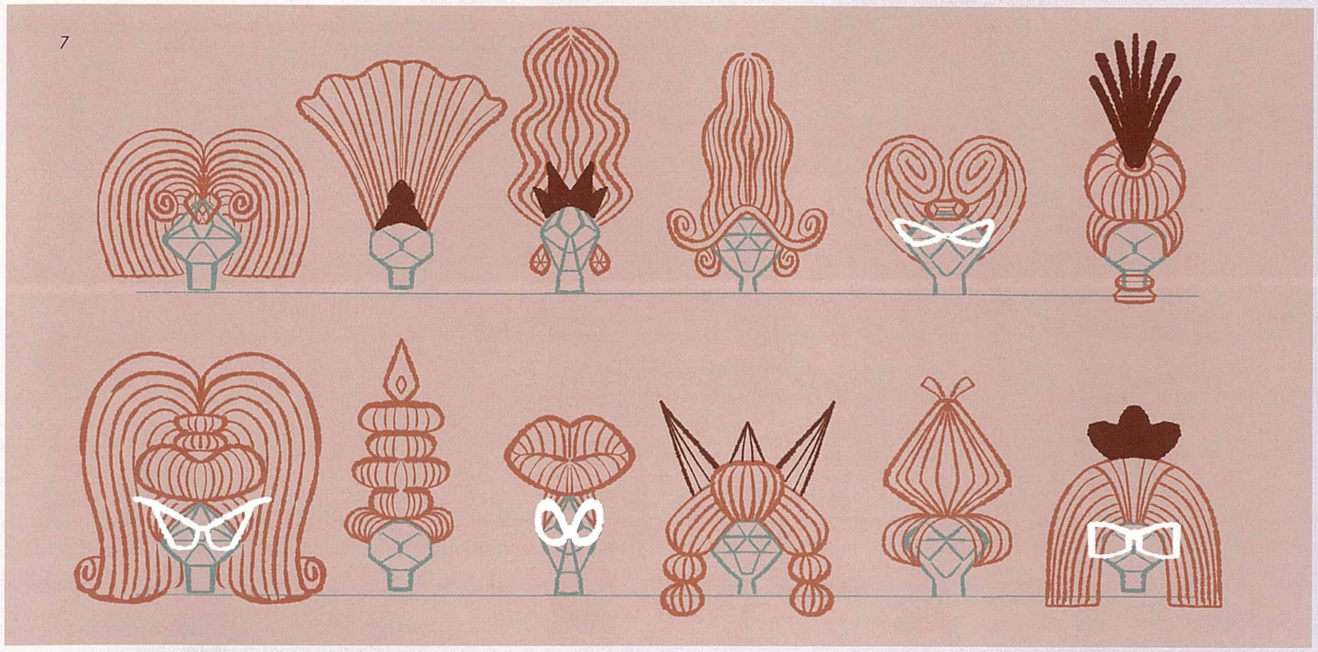

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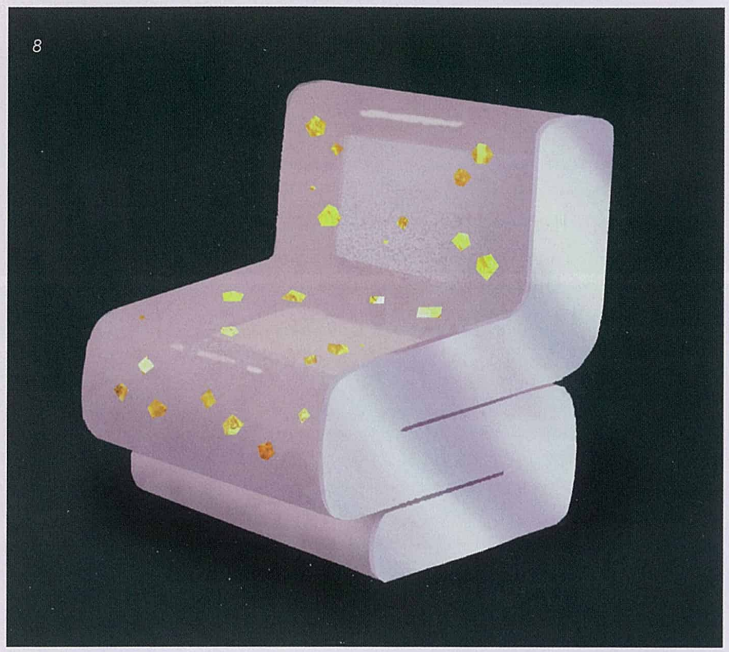
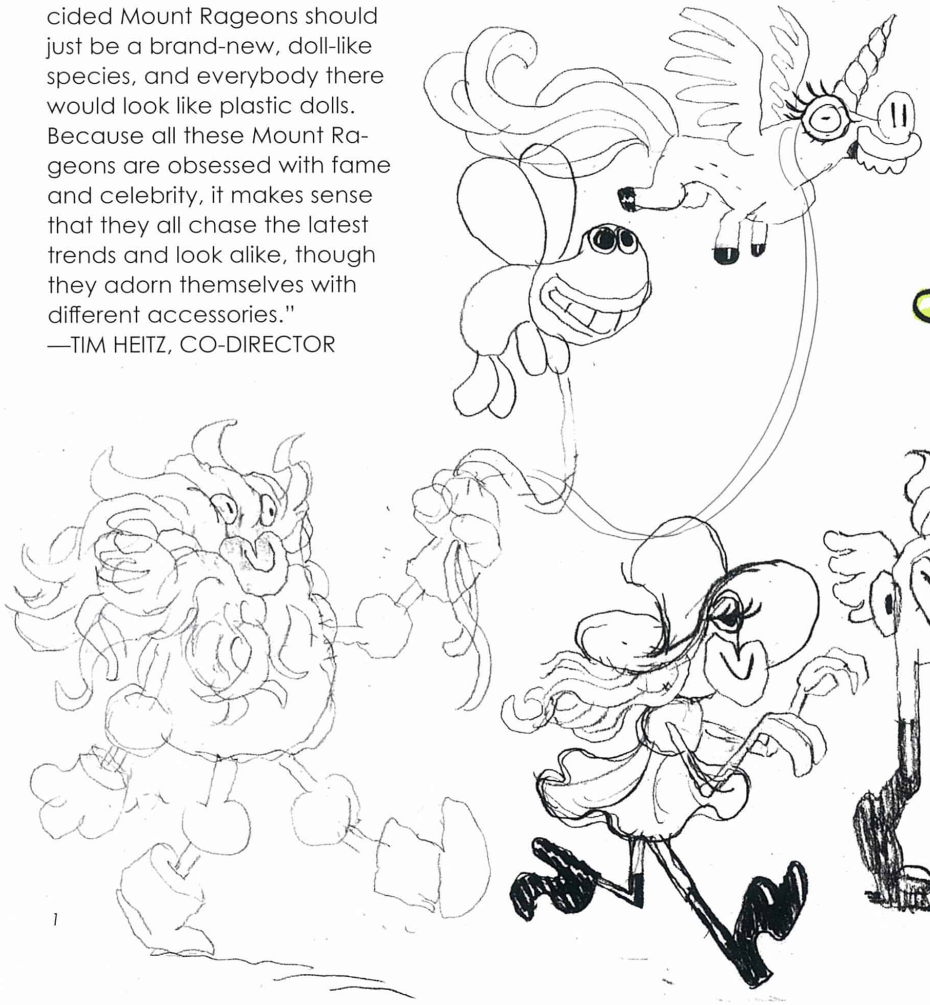


9

MOUNT RAGEONS

"One of the things we wanted to make sure of was that the Mount Rageons were their own unique species. Even though their design is humanoid, to differentiate them, we made sure that they had bendy arms and a porcelain feel to their skin. They're not human, so we had to make sure that we designed and built them in such a way that when they were animated, they appeared to be something different altogether."
—JOHN SWANSON, CO-PRODUCER

"After a lot of discussions with the art department, we decided Mount Rageons should just be a brand-new, doll-like species, and everybody there would look like plastic dolls. Because all these Mount Rageons are obsessed with fame and celebrity, it makes sense that they all chase the latest trends and look alike, though they adorn themselves with different accessories."
—TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR



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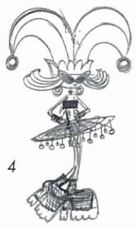

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1, 20: Dave Cooper • 2–8, 10–19, 21–23: Craig Kellman • 9, 24: Christa Carr

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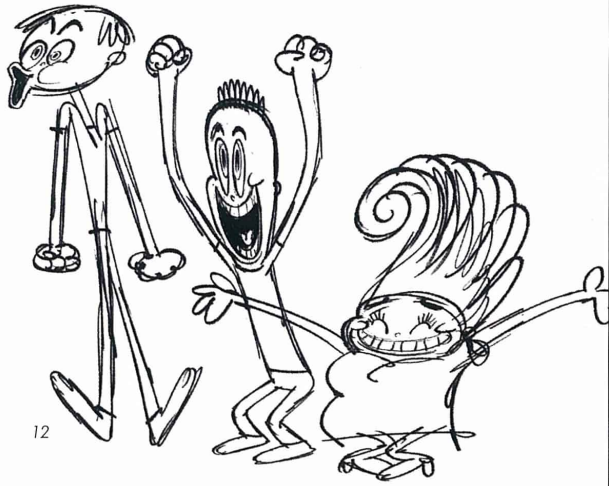

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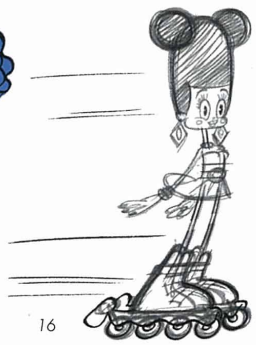

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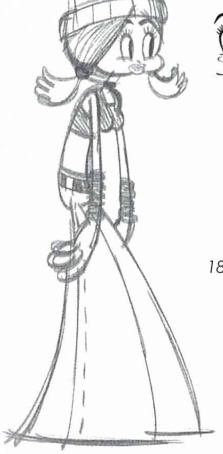

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23

"On this film, we've got even more characters that are ten times the size of our Trolls. When we started, it was insane looking at the sketches that our character designer Craig Kellman had created. He'd say, 'You want them to be made out of candy? How about they're made out of all water or ice?' Just watching somebody have free reign of wherever you wanted to go and then seeing that slowly coalesce into the characters that we have was a really cool process to be a part of."
—JAMES THORNTON, HEAD OF CHARACTER

24

THE RAGE DOME

"Everything points to this being the place where everyone wants to be. We had to make sure that we were really supporting the idea that this is the point from which our film is going to have the start of its big finale. It's a giant column, and at the top there's an enormous crystal ball that's made of onyx. It's a fun area in general because it feels like an amusement park as well."
—MATTHEW PAULSON, LOCATION MODELING SUPERVISOR

"The Rage Dome has become more of an icon like the Empire State Building. We designed it as this massive microphone smack in the middle of the city. It used to be a bigger part of the story, but now we never actually go inside of it."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR

AWE! 2

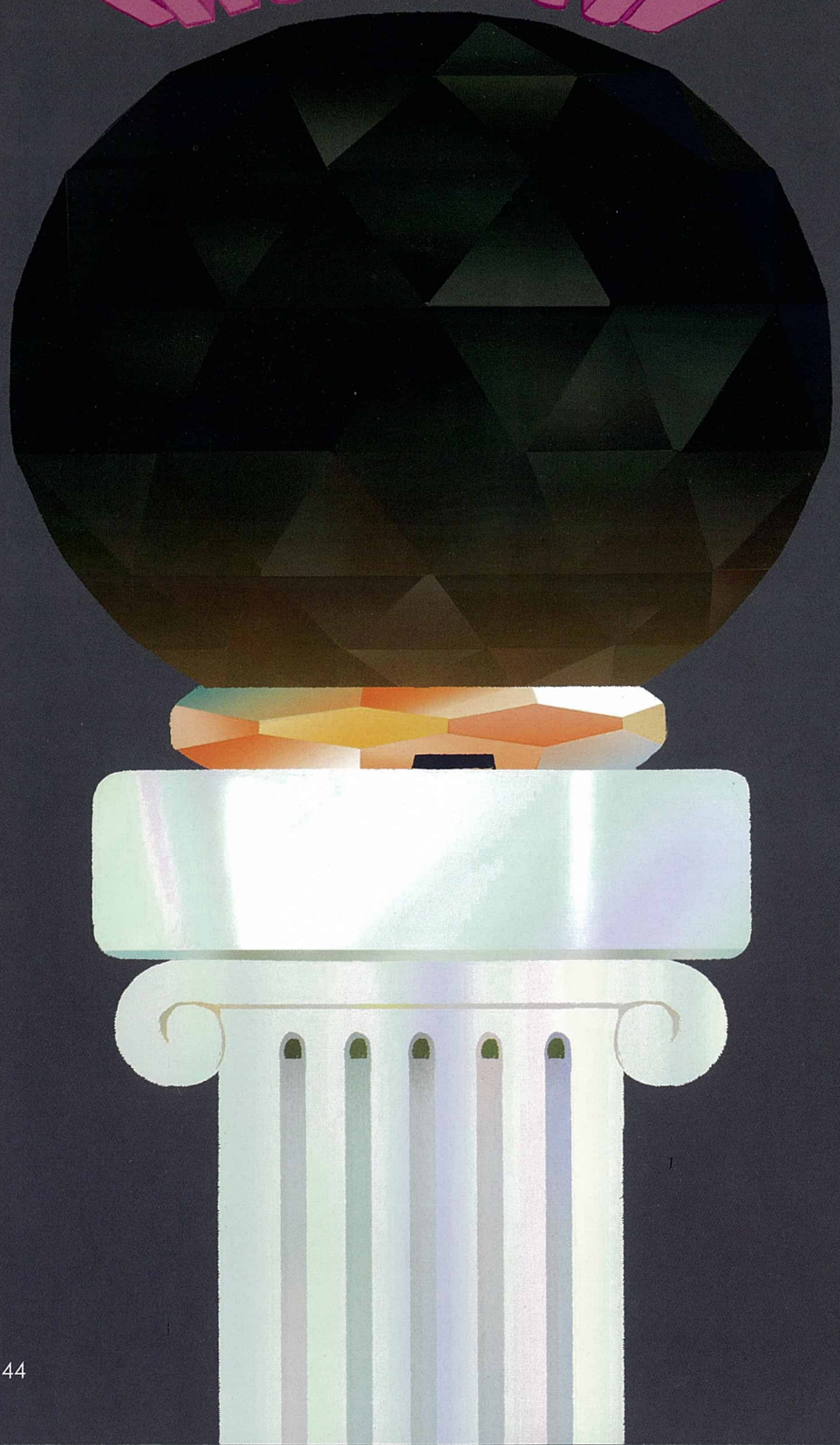
1, 4: Dave Cooper • 2, 3: Kenard Pak

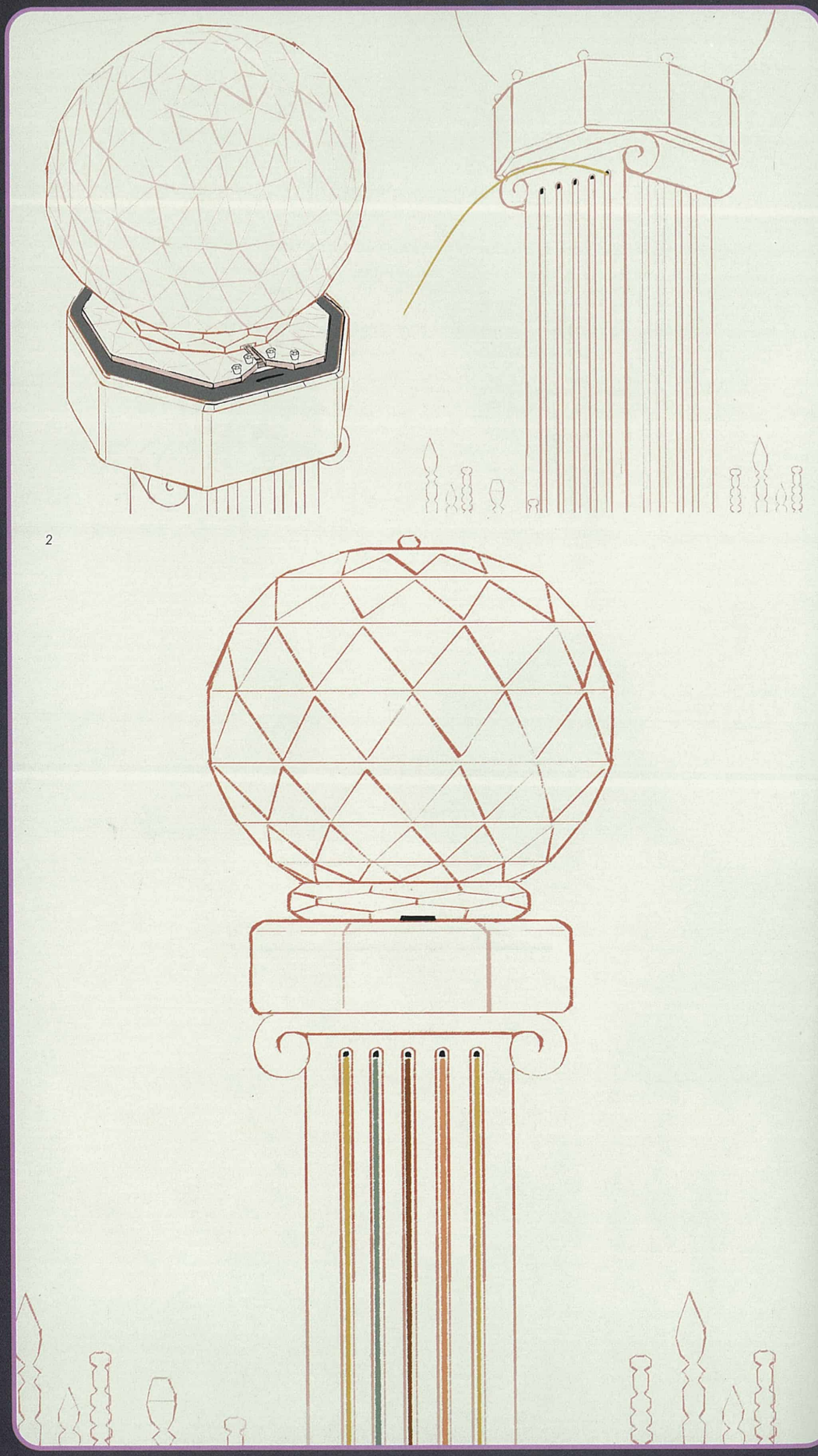
1

ROCK WOW!!! PARTY! VIP

GLAMORAMA GLITZO UNTUNED

RAGE DOME





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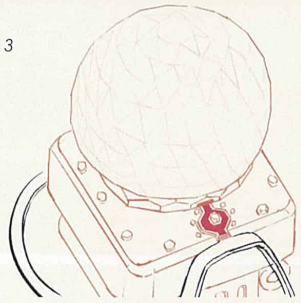

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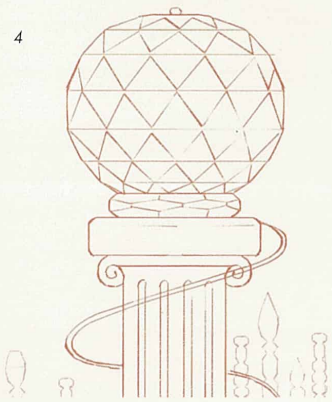

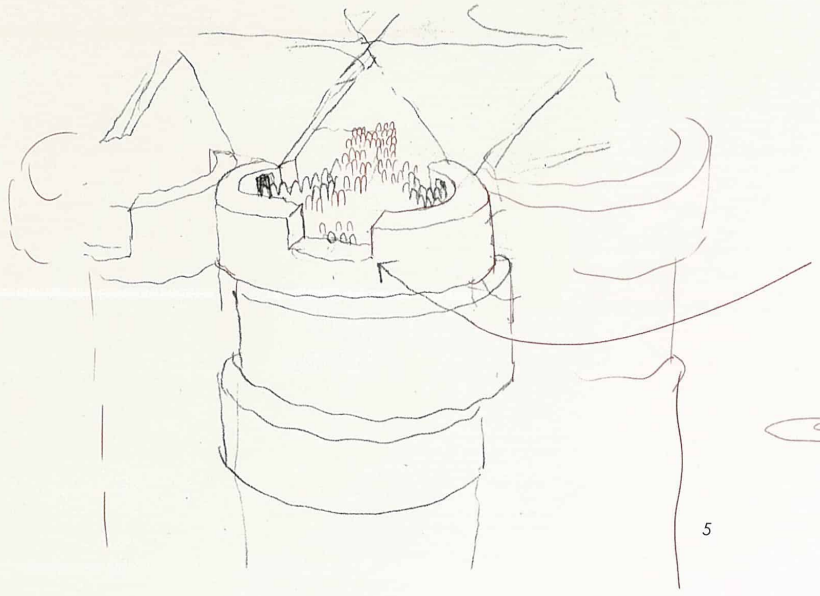

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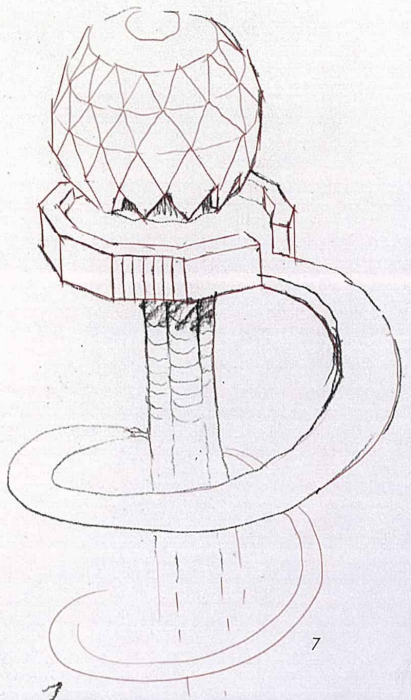

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1–4, 9–12: Stevie Lewis
• 5–8: Dave Cooper

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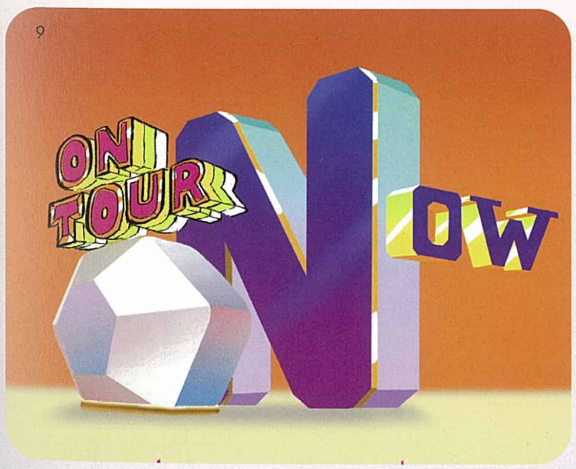

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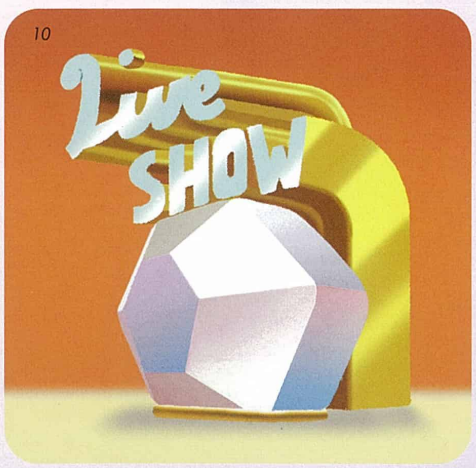

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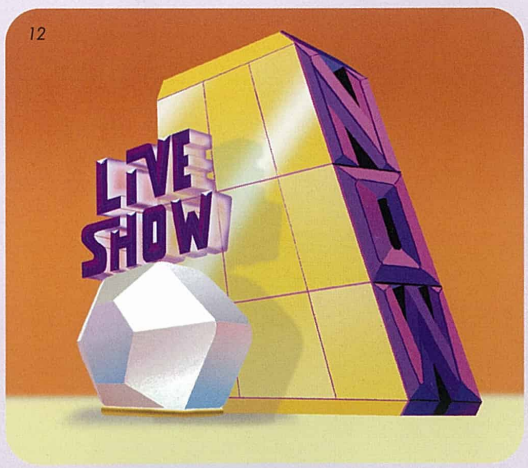
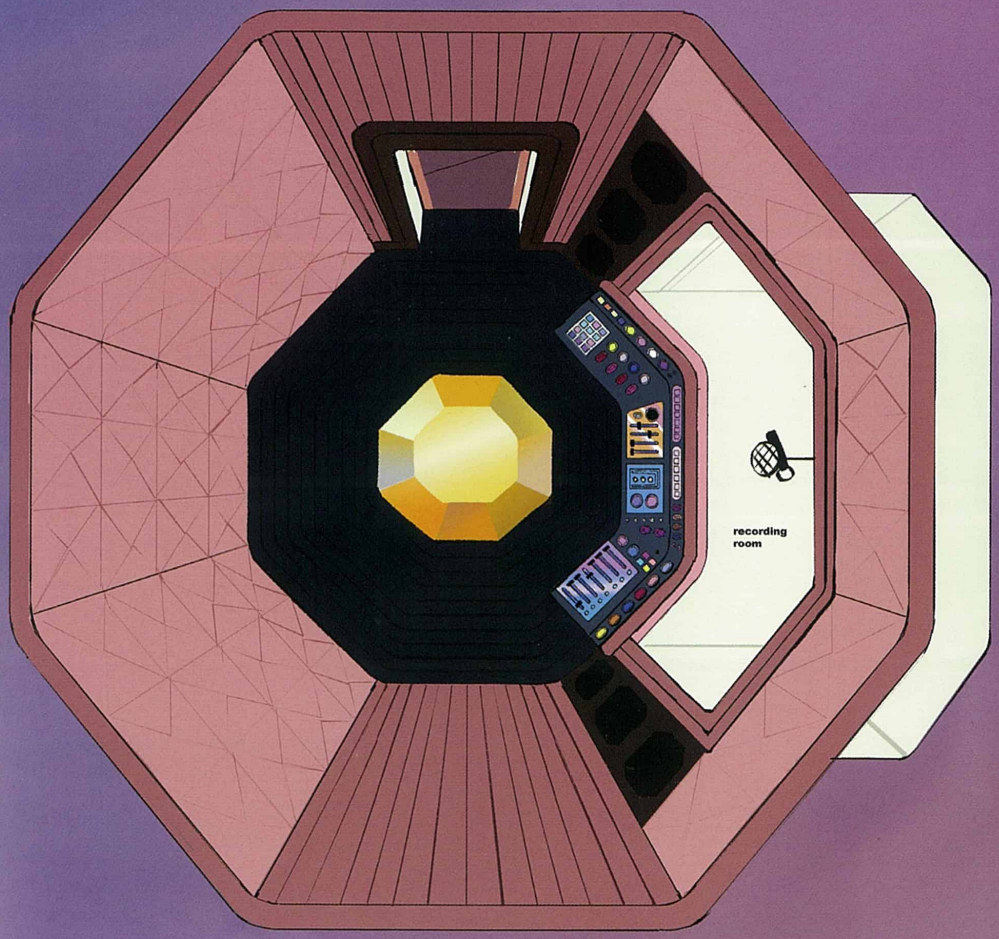
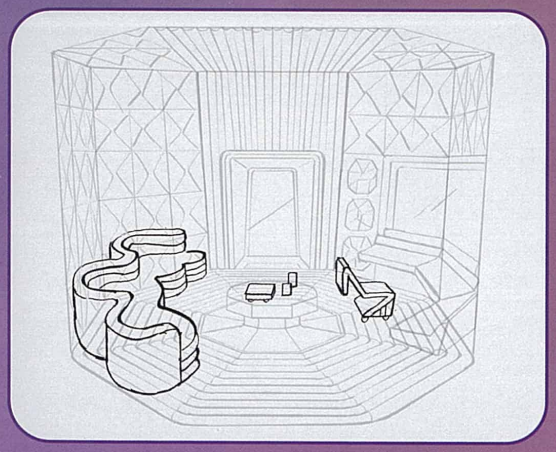
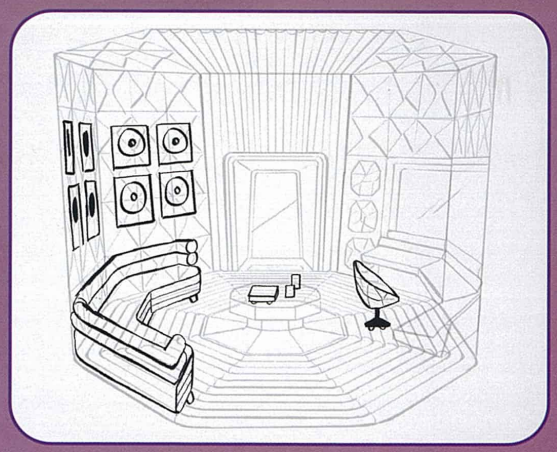


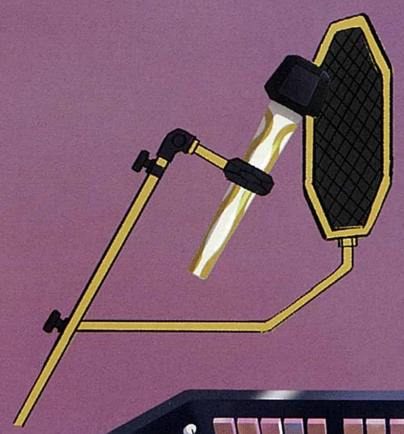
12

"We found pictures of fancy dressing rooms in New York venues, but we didn't want that. Since we don't spend much time there, we wanted it to read quickly as 'this is a dressing room'—but rooms aren't normal in Mount Rageous, so it looks like you're inside a perfume bottle; there's strange molding; the furniture has odd shapes on them. We had two fears about Mount Rageous: that it either looked too serious or looked like a strip club. We kept battling those two, and our answer to this was to do something ridiculous: we took our pillar and dipped it in paint, so there's drops of paint dripping off it; we added classical filigree picture frames and things like that, and at this point you start verging on postmodern, and we didn't want that either. That's when we made things chunky, like my two-year old daughter would play with."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR



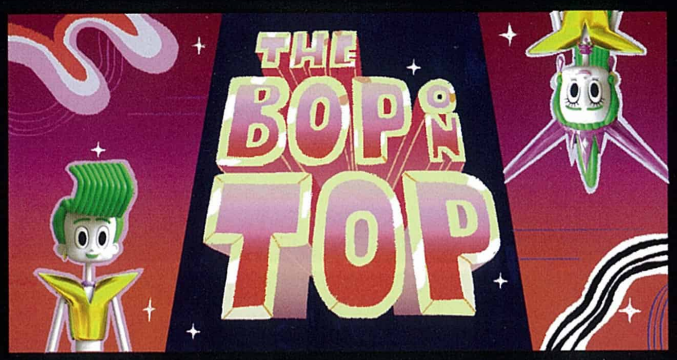


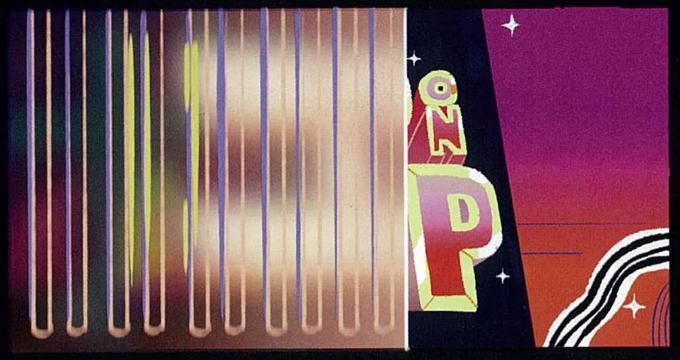




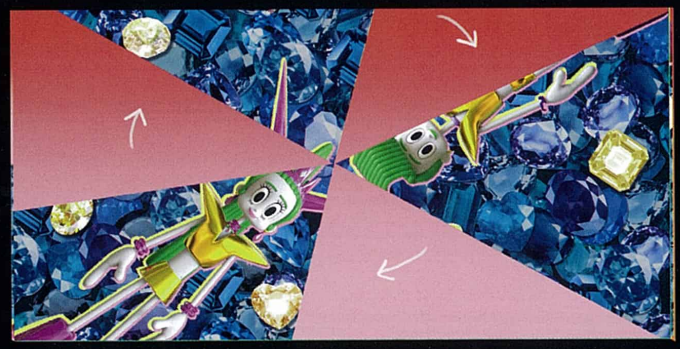
"Color plays a huge role in any film, and it always amazes me to see the production designers and art directors create these elaborate and wonderful color scripts of every sequence in the movie and link it all together. It's a very global view of the whole film. Obviously, *Trolls* is a really vibrant film—effects always look really good over black, so we have an interesting challenge to make the effects integrate into a really vibrant and bright environment. But we always have to consider how it plays with the audience, too. There are obviously those moments where you want the audience to feel a sense of doom or gloom—maybe it's a lot darker, and then at the end of the movie—especially in the *Trolls* films—you want to end on a light, bright moment. As effects artists, we have to look at that and make sure that everything we do in design works with the color. We offer a lot of the colors ourselves for the effects, and then we usually try to give the lighting department control over how they can adjust the color of our elements in the final render for the film."
—STEPHEN WOOD, HEAD OF EFFECTS

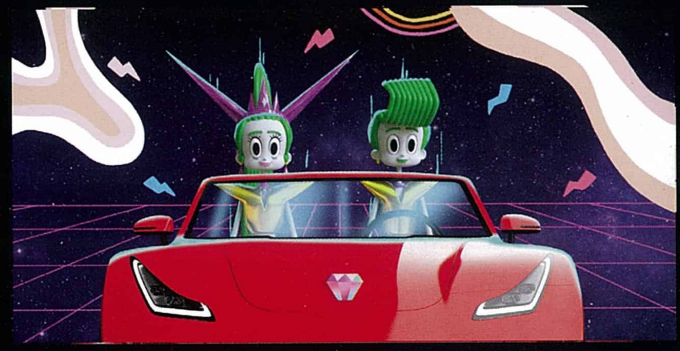
THIS SPREAD: Stevie Lewis

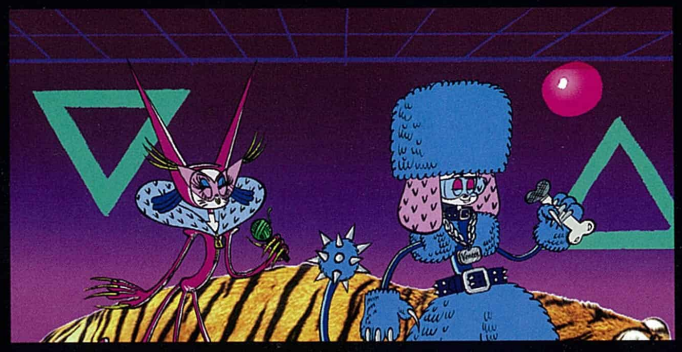

THE BOP ON TOP

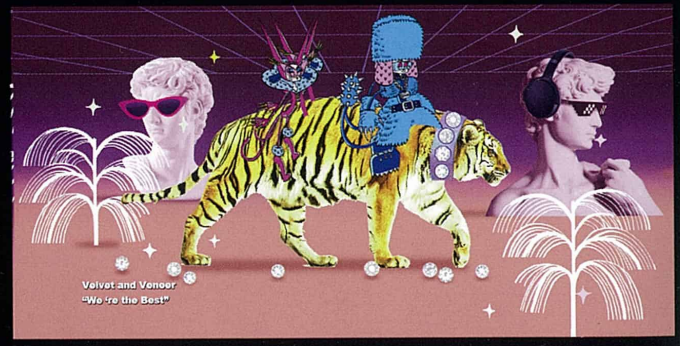

ON
P

VELVET
&
VENEER
Velvet and Veneer
"Watch Me Work"
Rageous Records

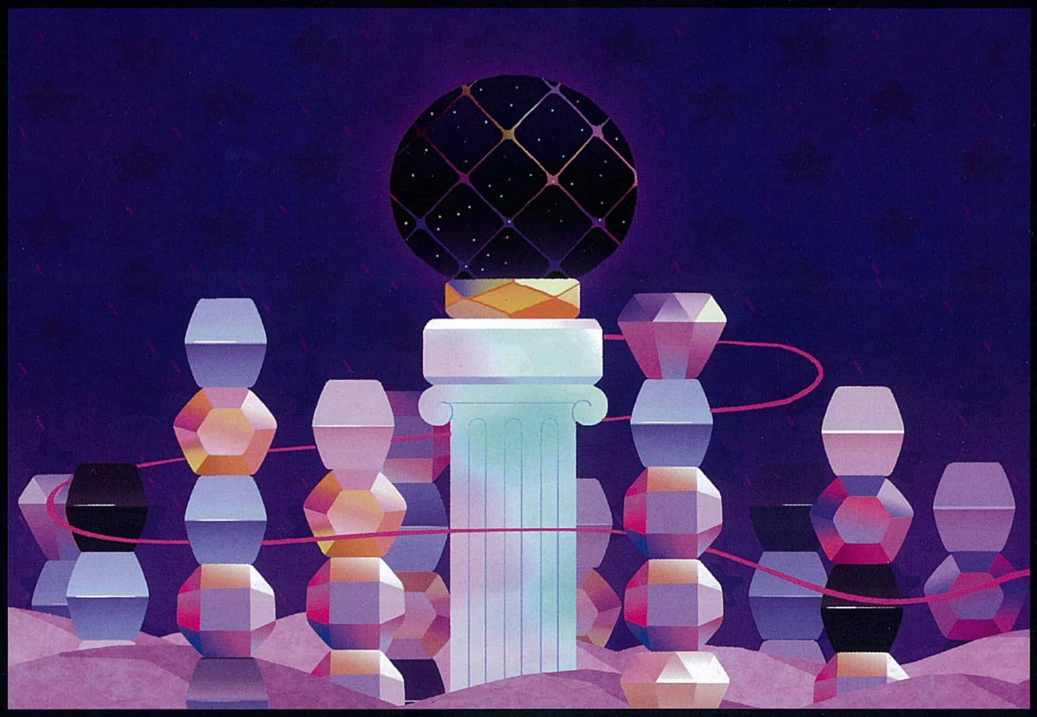


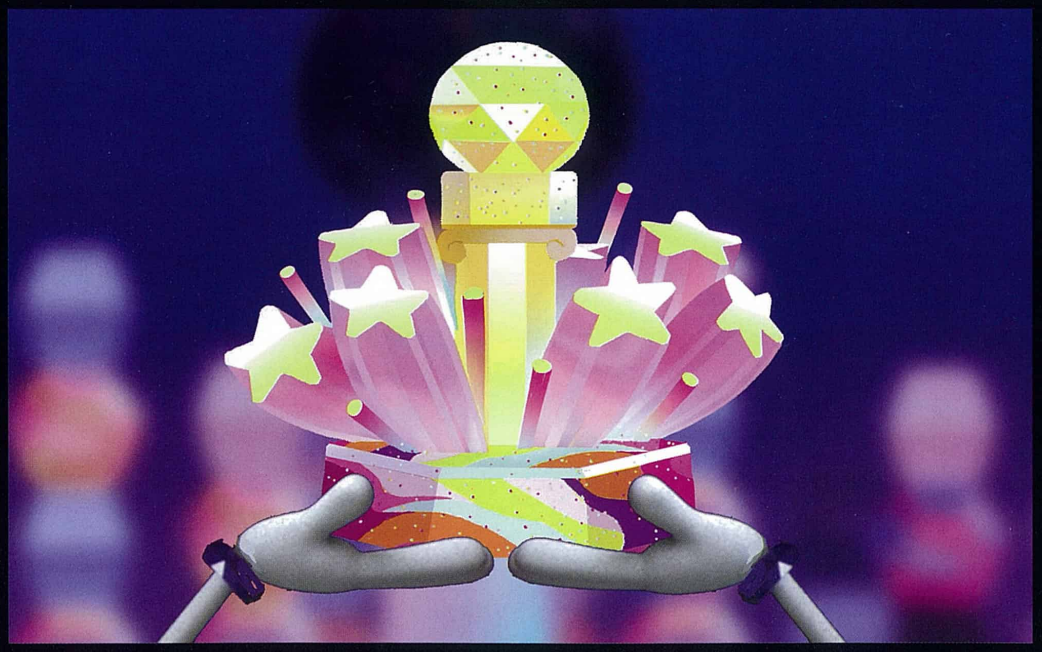





Velvet and Veneer
"We're the Best"

THE BOP ON TOP
1 WE'RE THE BEST VELVET AND VENEER
2 EARN THAT GOLD ROLLIE ROY
3 MAKIN' BANK PHAT SAMMY
4 I GOT A NEW CAR JAYE BEE
5 BRINGIN' IN DOUGH SAGE BOYZ





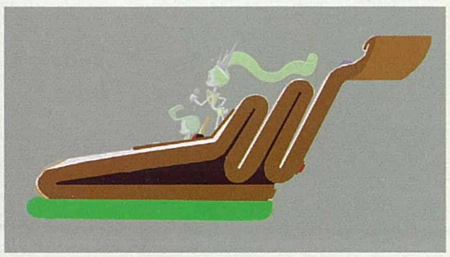
THIS SPREAD: Stevie Lewis

THE CAR CHASE

"It took the entire story team months to get the chase sequence feeling big and sprawling, utilizing an amazing location that the art team created, and really celebrating that. One of the great things about the *Trolls* universe is that it has these very unique locations, so any time we can take advantage of them and luxuriate in them is a plus."
—COLIN JACK, HEAD OF STORY

"It's a 'postapocalyptic action film meets road musical' concert. It's a fun, different approach. It's where we agreed to spend our money! When you weigh the complexity of the film, we intentionally kept everything else manageable knowing that in act 3, we were going to go all in as much as we could, meaning the scene is complex because they're traveling—you can constantly change that environment as they're driving through it and how they interact with it."
—JOHN SWANSON, CO-PRODUCER

1, 5, 7: Kenard Pak • 2–4: Tom MacDougall • 6: Stevie Lewis



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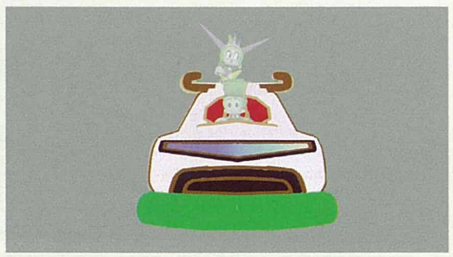

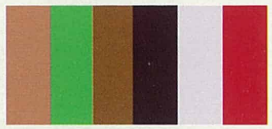

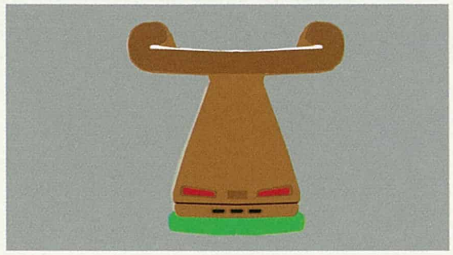

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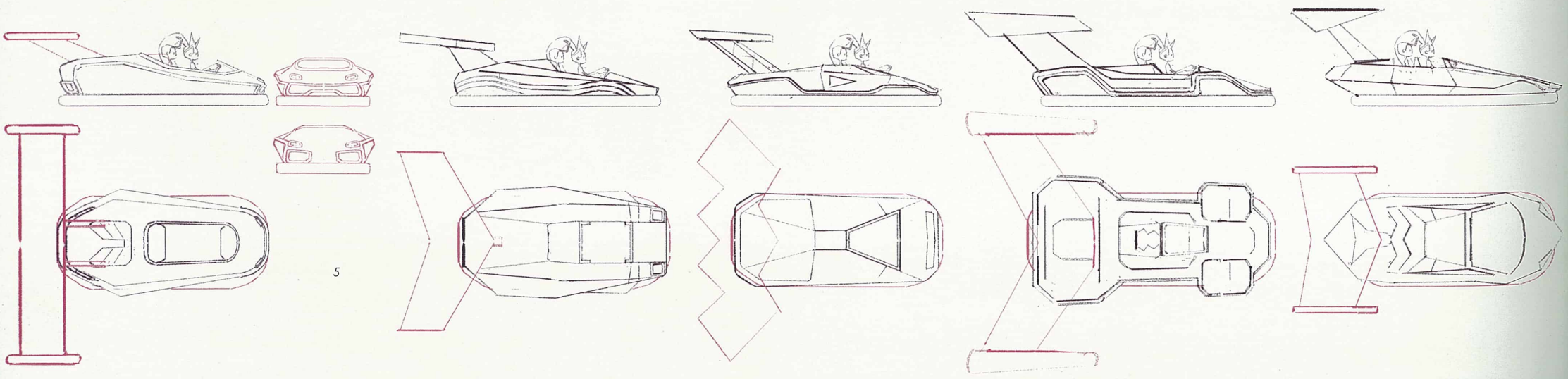

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"In the finale, instead of Velvet and Veneer having a traditional performance, they literally take the performance on the road, so we've got crowd characters in crowd vehicle traffic who are watching the show as Velvet and Veneer are driving around the highways of Mount Rageous. Typically, all we're doing when we do traffic is populating an environment and making it feel alive, whereas in this case, the traffic is actually concertgoers who are very much reacting to the concert that's happening on the road. There are double-decker buses filled with crowds that are cheering and watching the show. In addition to that, the design of how the vehicles work in Mount Rageous adds an additional level of complexity, because they don't have wheels like a traditional car; they look more like bumper cars of various sizes. The limousines are so long that they're longer than the radius of the turns of the roads, so they conform to the road and flex and bend. All the vehicles have a gelatin-like consistency to them so that they can conform—as they're going up and down roads, they conform to the shape of the road, and then all the occupants inside bounce around each other, and it's all a little bit like inflatable characters. There's a lot of added complexity to pulling that off."
—SPENCER KNAPP,
CROWDS SUPERVISOR

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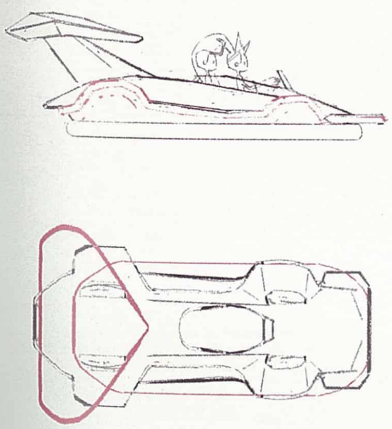

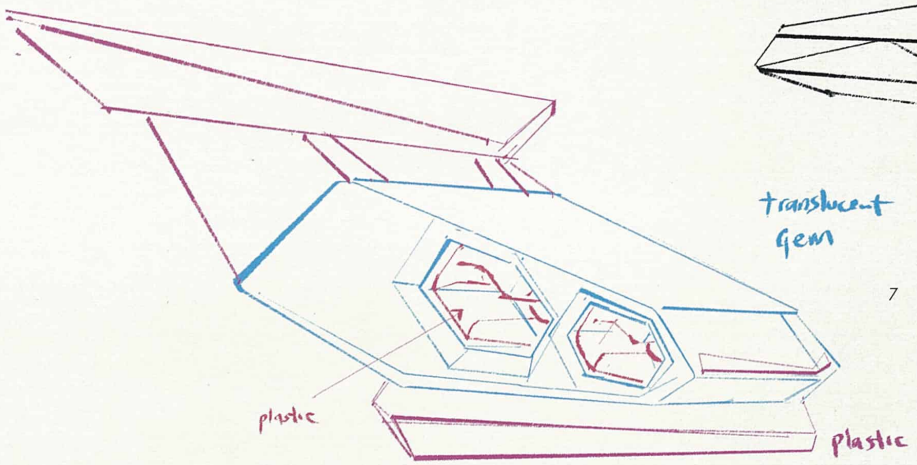

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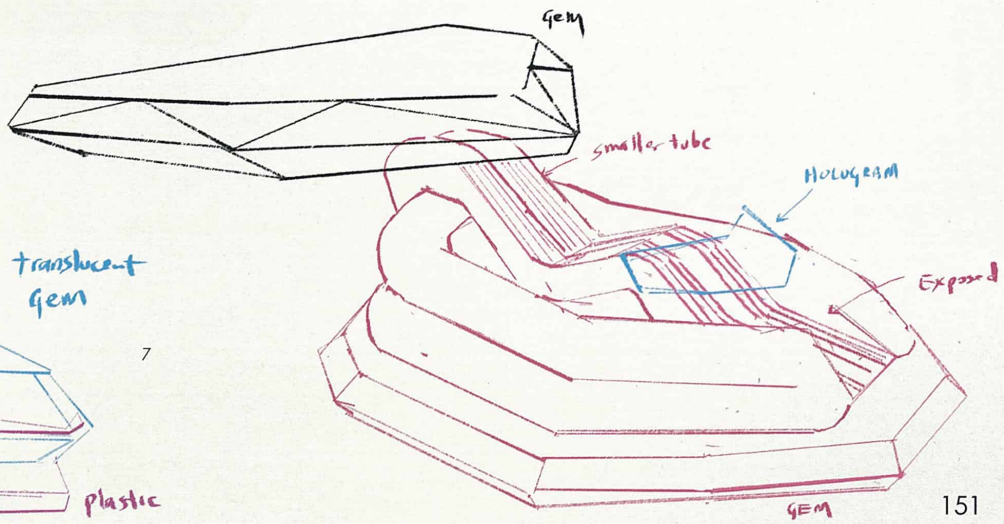


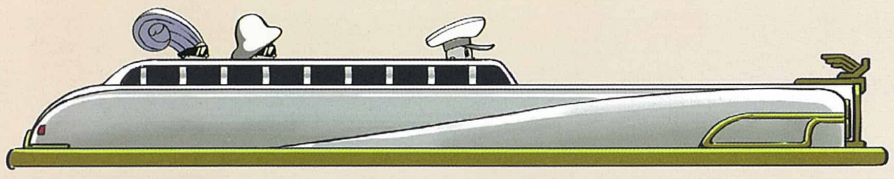
"Bumper Cars"

Could look like various shoes/sneakers
Could be hovercrafts
or on ground

1

2

3



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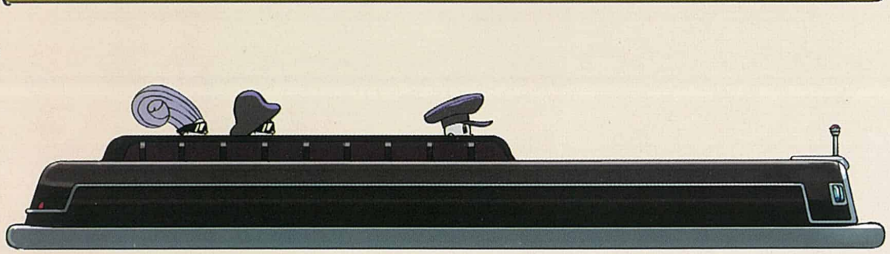

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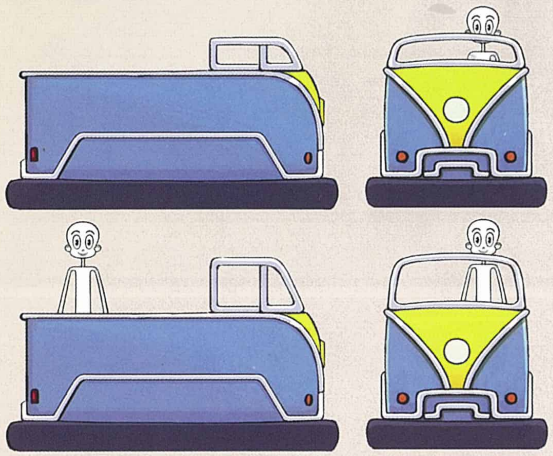

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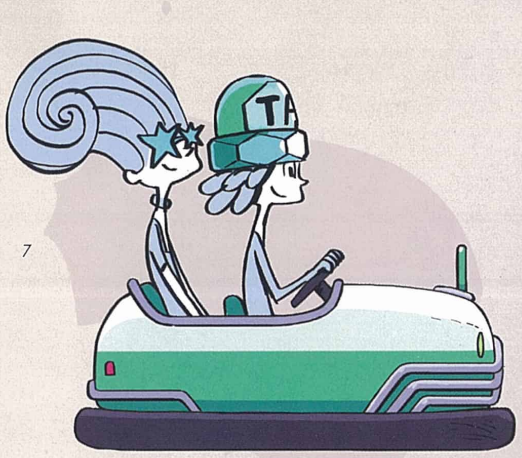

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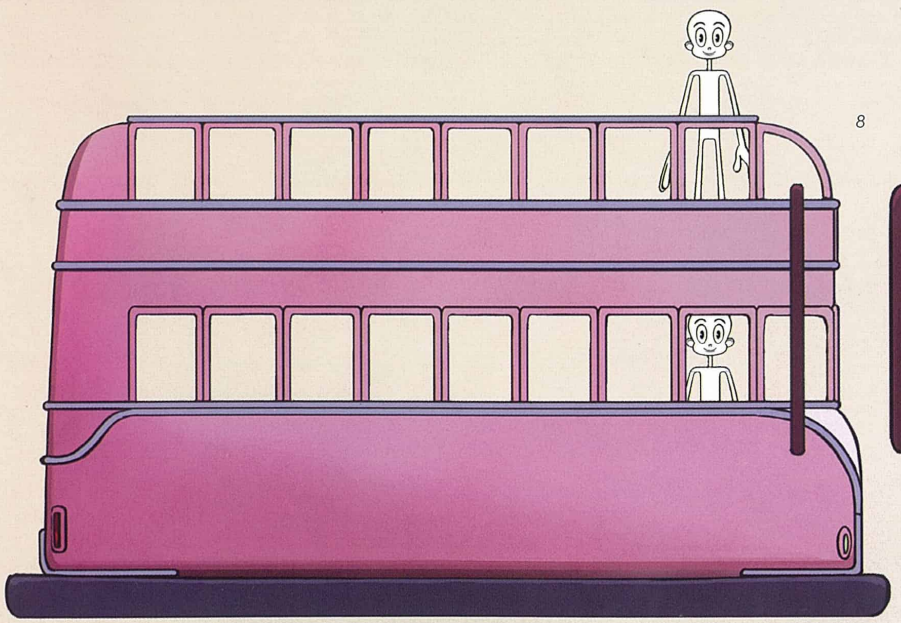

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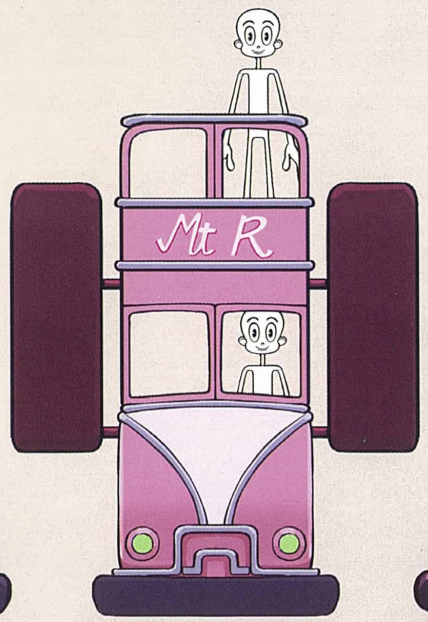

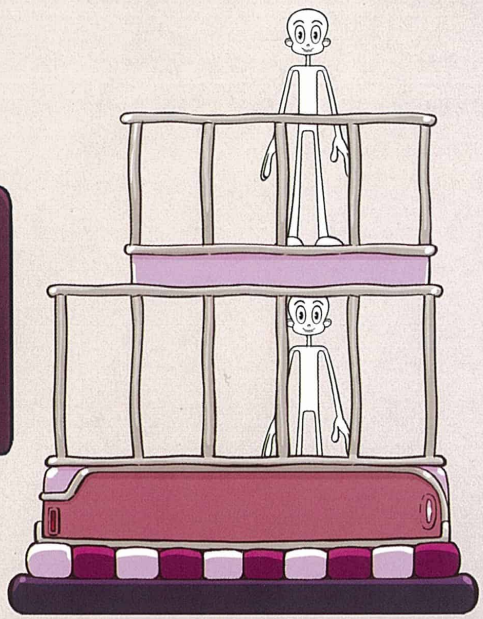

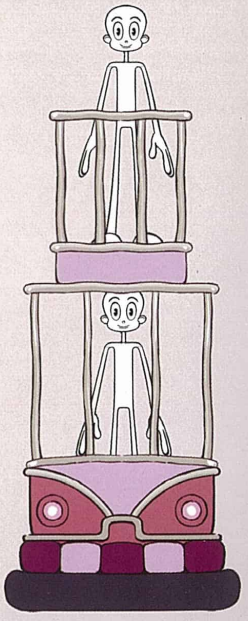

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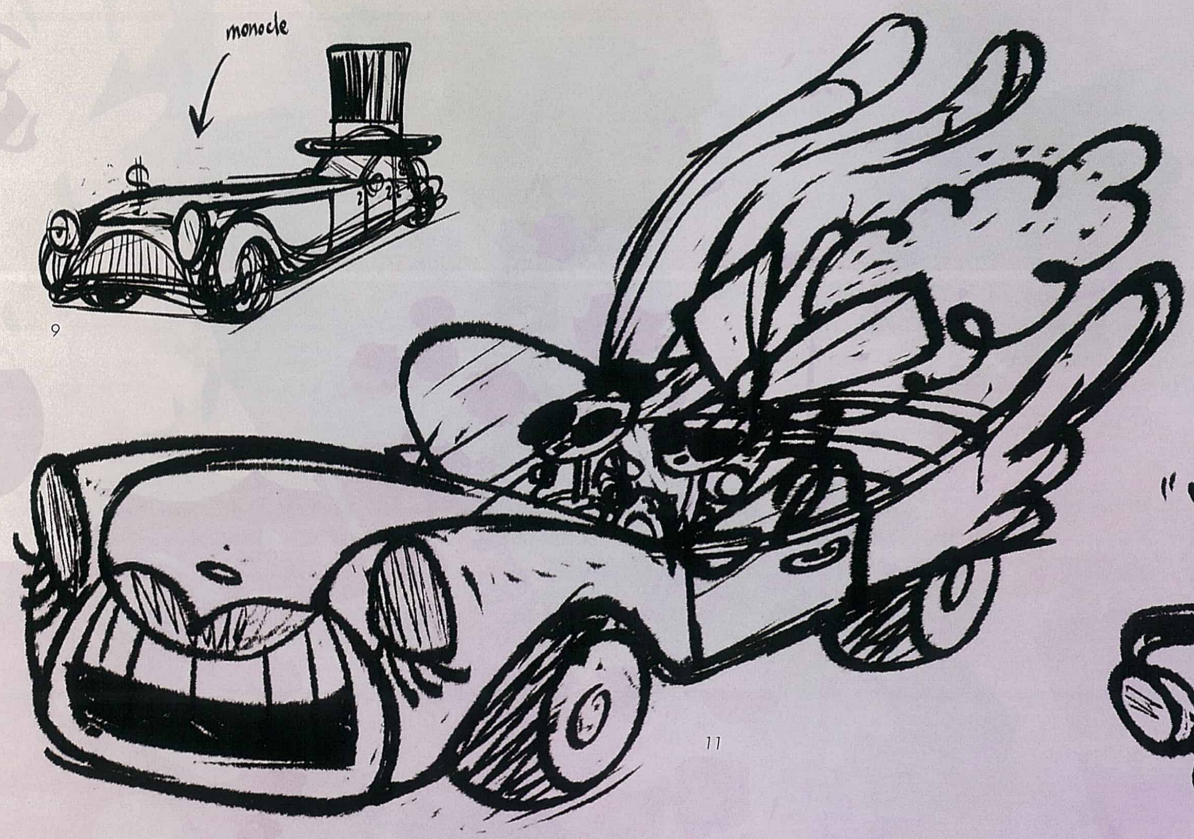

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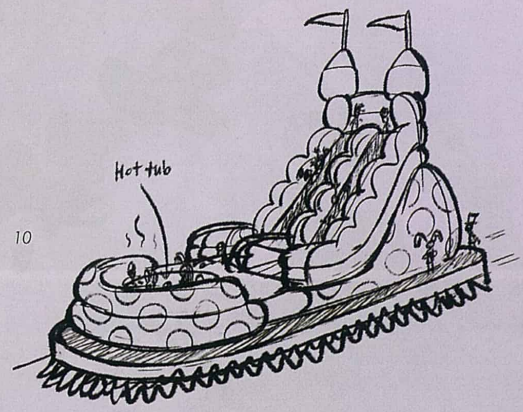

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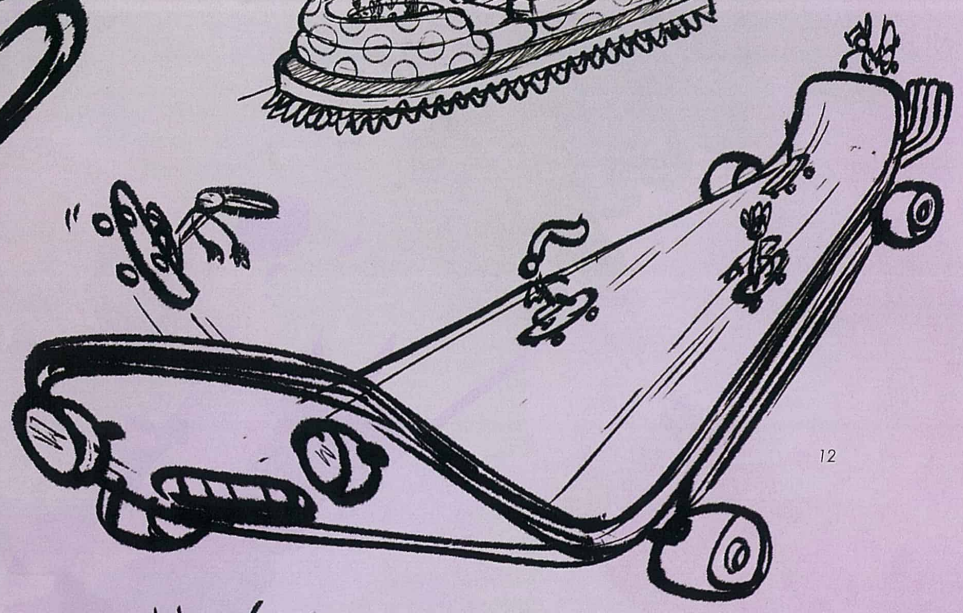

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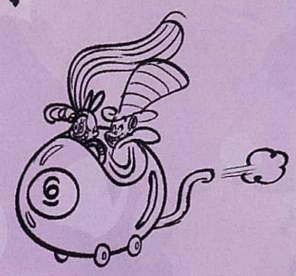

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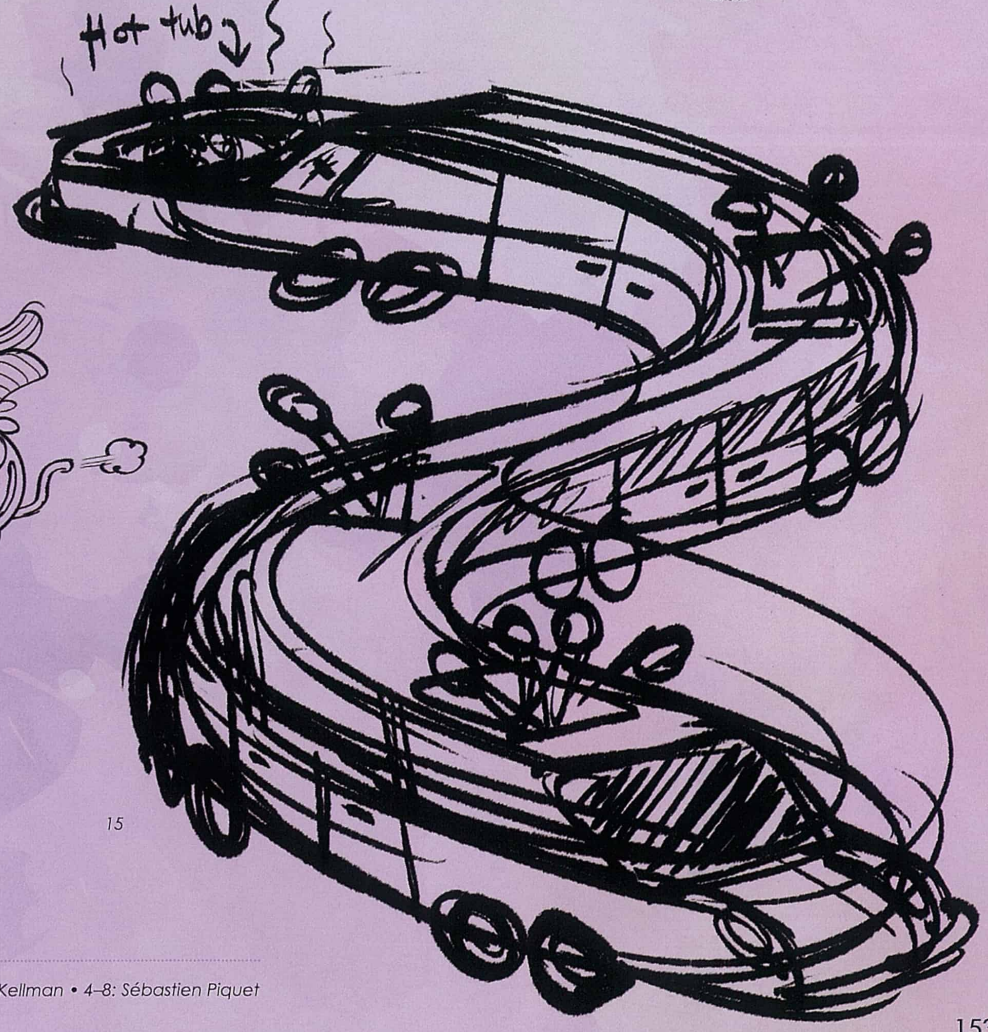

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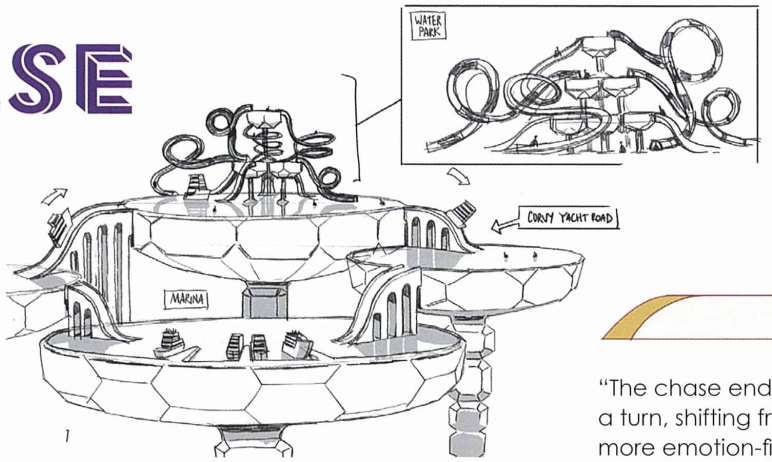
1–3, 9–15: Craig Kellman • 4–8: Sébastien Piquet

THE BOAT CHASE

"At one point earlier in the movie, Velvet and Veneer go off to buy a yacht; it's a little one-off moment; you're not supposed to take it seriously. But sure enough, they go and buy a yacht, which we end up seeing at the end of the film. Its design was inspired by paddleboats. There's a whole network of roads and canals that make up what's in between all the different gem stacks in Mount Rageous. We imagined the canal is the fashion district where people go to see big shows. The shape of the canal was inspired by an ice-cream scoop, and the climax, with all the characters involved, happens at the end of the scoop."
—KENARD PAK, ART DIRECTOR



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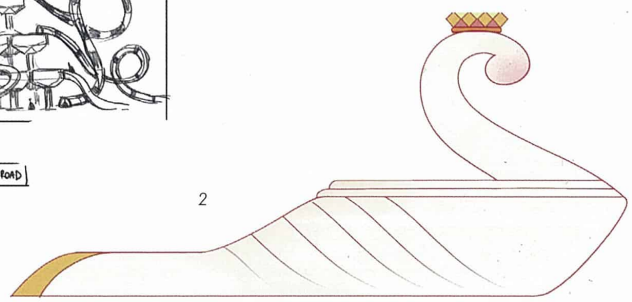
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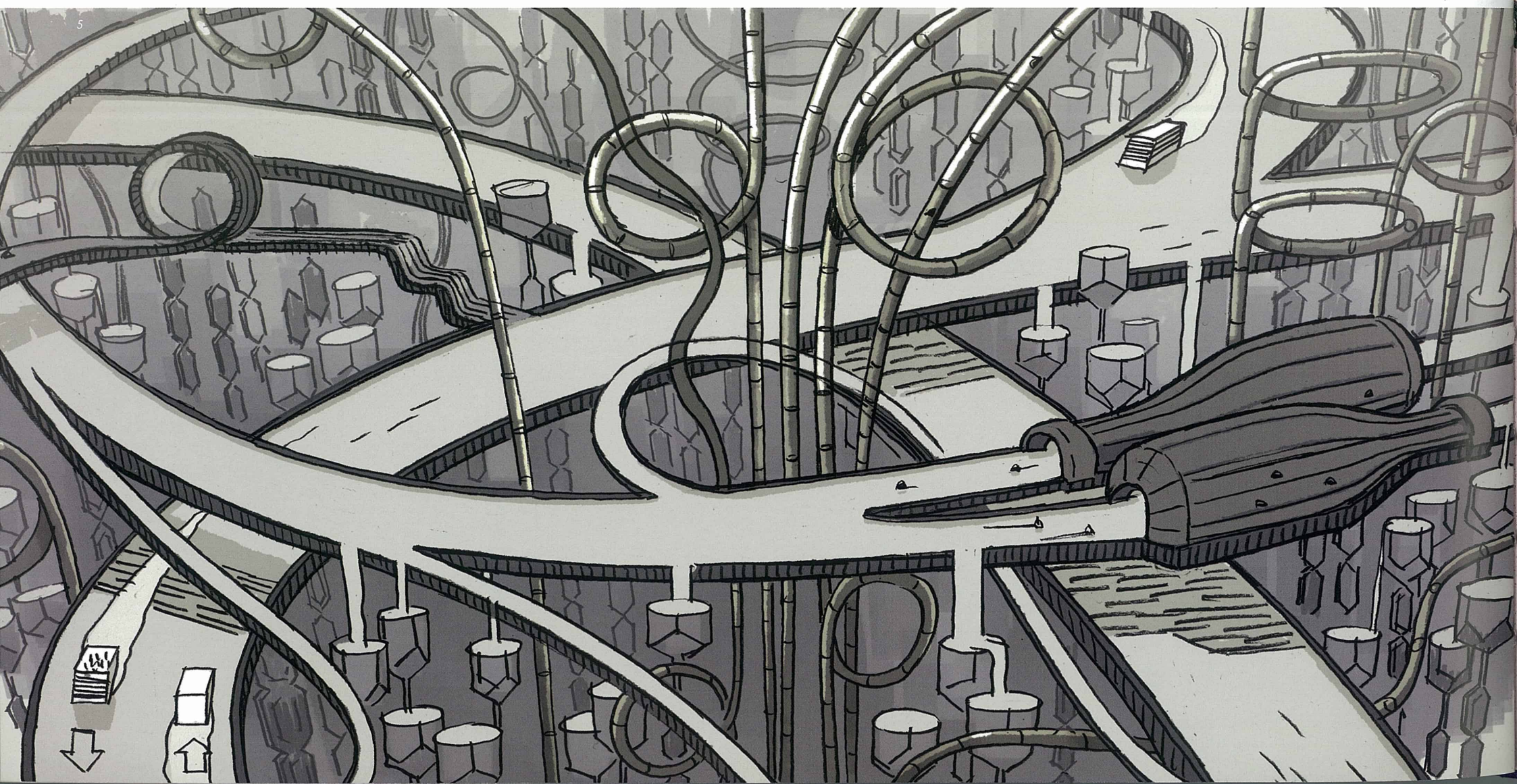
"The chase ends on the boat. The boat section takes a turn, shifting from a more action-filled chase to a more emotion-filled performance, finally witnessing the growth of the family members coming to life and reaching the understanding and acceptance of each other we've been looking forward to."
—THEOPHILE BONDOUX, HEAD OF LAYOUT

"At the end of the car chase, Velvet and Veneer crash their sports car, fly down ten stories, and land on a super luxurious yacht. If you took a gem and sliced it into a yacht shape, that would be it. The chase and concert both continue. That is what ultimately takes us to the end of the movie."
—RUBEN PEREZ, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

3

4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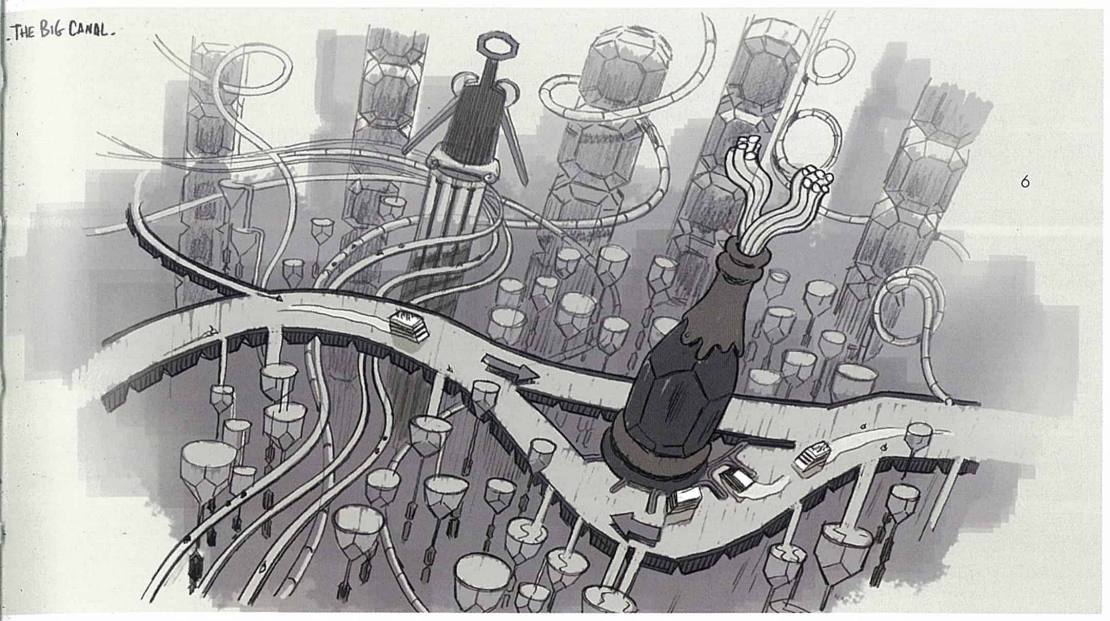

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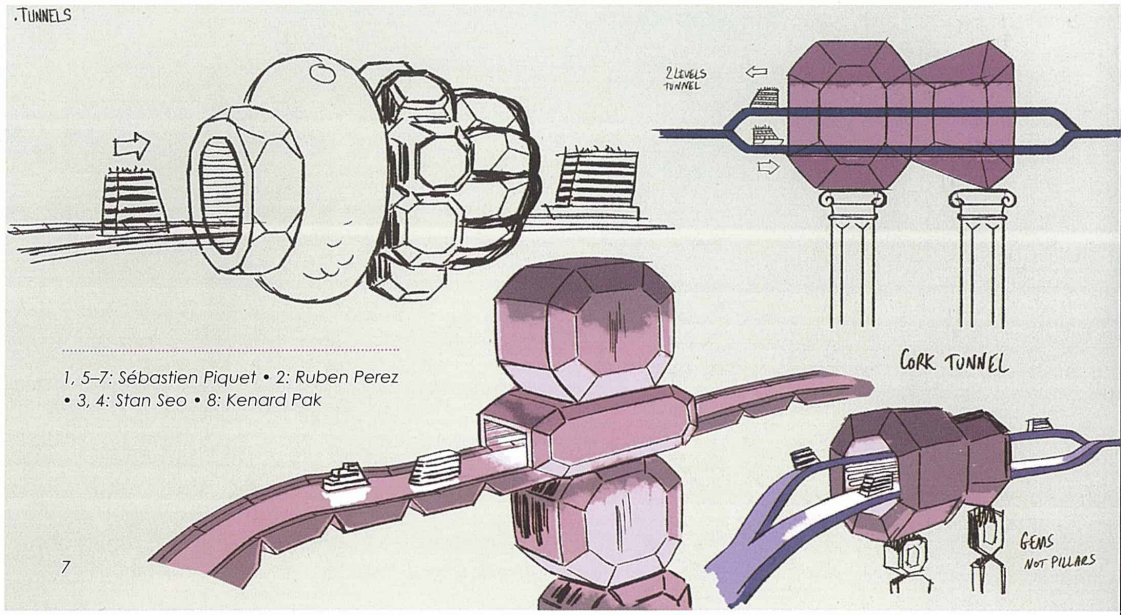

1, 5–7: Sébastien Piquet • 2: Ruben Perez • 3, 4: Stan Seo • 8: Kenard Pak

7

Sq 3000/3100 Canal v05

8

AFTERWORD
TIM HEITZ, CO-DIRECTOR

I'm going to be totally honest.

Years back, when it was announced that DreamWorks Animation had purchased the rights to the Troll dolls and were planning to make a movie about them, I may have rolled my eyes a little bit.

To me, they all looked the same, there wasn't a storyline to pull from, no "characters" to connect with—and if I'm being real with you, I kind of thought it might just be a ploy to sell some toys.

But then the news came that Walt Dohrn (whom I had previously worked with on *Mr. Peabody & Sherman*) and Gina Shay (of *Shrek* producing fame) were teaming up to lead the charge, and my hesitations turned into . . . let's just say "cautious optimism."

Fast forward to about eight or so years later, and I can't even begin to tell you how wrong I was with those early cynical thoughts. The Troll dolls were a jumping-off point. A blank canvas. A brilliant seedling of an idea embedded in a massively popular toy that was just begging to have a story told. A magical world waiting to be created.

I was fortunate to be brought onto the first *Trolls* film as a story artist, and I was immediately blown away by the creativity and innovation being poured into the movie from every conceivable angle. Story meetings felt like going on that trippy boat ride in *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. Things would get really, really weird. One minute, someone would pitch an idea about a talking cloud who wears socks and grows fourteen fingers for an elaborate handshake joke. Then suddenly there would be a sharp left turn, and another story artist would be playing an acoustic guitar and singing "True Colors," and we'd all be fighting back tears. Literally, anything could happen in this world.

Meanwhile, the Art Department was elbow-deep constructing real-life scrapbooks and building a sculpture of a felted forest to create a physical guide for how the *Trolls* world would look and feel: completely and totally tactile. The vision was to bring an almost hand-felted quality to CG in a way we had never seen done before.

Animation was bringing their A game, breathing a grounded reality into these funny-looking tiny creatures with big ears and tall, colorful hair. Then on the turn of a dime, they would be singing, dancing, defying gravity, and pushing the boundaries of what this truly unique medium can do.

And don't even get me started on the Lighting, Surfacing (now known as Look Dev), and FX departments. I'll just say this: absolute wizards. Each frame is an astonishing piece of art.

Add on top of that all of the incredible voice and musical talent that joined the show, and it just came together in such a remarkable way. BTW, has anyone heard a song called "Can't Stop the Feeling!"?

So now here we are, three films and two holiday specials in, and all of that original excitement, weirdness, silliness, boundary pushing, technological innovation, brilliant music, emotional depth, and resonant messaging wrapped in absolute insanity is still flowing, still surprising us, still coming together in the mystical, logic-defying way in which animation does—and dare I say, only getting better. I mean, we have a ukulele-playing ball of shredded packing paper, for crying out loud! If that doesn't get butts in seats, I don't know what will.

But at its core, when you pare back all that fuzzy felted exterior, *Trolls Band Together* is a movie about family, made during a time in which people were locked inside with their family, relying on their family, getting sick of their family, and ultimately, coming out on the other side of some really crazy s . . . tuff with their family—all while simultaneously navigating a turbulent sea of technological challenges and process-dismantling curve balls. These real-life experiences became the DNA of this film.

And what makes me the most proud of this whole thing is how the *Trolls* crew truly "banded together" (sorry, I couldn't resist) like a family to make it all happen. Were there obstacles and frustrations? Absolutely. But everyone rose to the occasion in every single magnificent way, and have completely shattered my expectations of what a team of creative, ambitious, intelligent, visionary artists, storytellers, and technological geniuses can accomplish together when the going gets rough. This movie truly is a labor of love.

In short, this experience has been a dream to be a part of. The movie is beautiful. It's funny, it's unexpected, it's visually stunning, it's action-packed, the music is top-notch, and it's full of heart. But the true beauty of the film is the people behind it—their unbreakable spirit when they saw the impossible sitting in front of them and said, "Nah, we got this." The family-forward mentality that thought, *You know what? Maybe this isn't the perfect set of circumstances in which to make a movie, but all that really matters is that we do it together.*

Thank you, *Trolls* fam. It's truly been an honor.

1: Taylor Krahenbuhl • 2: Dave Cooper

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & CREW

DreamWorks Animation would like to thank the entire crew of *Trolls Band Together*, who worked tirelessly to create this beautiful and engaging film, along with the spectacular leadership team of Margie Cohn, Kristin Lowe, Walt Dohrn, Gina Shay, Tim Heitz, John Swanson, Amanda Lee, Ruben Perez, Kenard Pak, Charlotte Tobias, Marc Scott, Cassandra Fanning, James Thornton, Zachary Gold, Isabelle Feintrenie, Lisa Briggs, JD Nathanson, Melissa Mabie, Sophie Brennan, Mike Vollman, Courtenay Palaski, Jerry Schmitz, Michael Garcia, Debbie Luner, Virginia Eastwood, and Adria Munnerlyn.

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ABOVE: *Kenard Pak* • OPPOSITE: *Crew photograph courtesy of DreamWorks Animation* • OVERLEAF: *Taylor Krahenbuhl* • FRONT & BACK COVER: *Craig Kellman* • ENDPAPERS: *Craig Kellman* • FRONT ENDPAPER: *Ruben Perez* • BACK ENDPAPER: *Dave Cooper*